De Wilde pinx.t *Audinet sculp.*

Mrs. MATTOCKS as LADY RESTLESS.

This is really a handsome picture: what a charming countenance!

London. Printed for J. Bell, British Library, Strand, May 5. 1792.

ALL IN THE WRONG.

A

COMEDY,

By ARTHUR MURPHY, Esq.

ADAPTED FOR

THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRES-ROYAL,
DRURY-LANE AND COVENT-GARDEN.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOKS,

By Permission of the Managers.

LONDON:

Printed for the Proprietors, under the Direction of
JOHN BELL, *British Library,*
Bookseller to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

M DCC XCII.

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M DCC XCII.

PROLOGUE.

Written and spoken by SAMUEL FOOTE, Esq.

TO-NIGHT, be it known to box, gall'ry, and pit,
*Will be open'd the best * summer-warehouse for wit;*
The new manufacture, Foote and Co. undertakers;
Play, pantomime, opera, farce—by the makers!
We scorn, like our brethren, our fortunes to owe
To Shakspere *and* Southern, *to* Otway *and* Rowe.
Though our judgment may err, yet our justice is shewn,
For we promise to mangle no works but our own.
And moreover on this you may firmly rely,
If we can't make you laugh, that we won't make you cry.
For Roscius, *who knew we were mirth-loving souls,*
Has lock'd up his lightning, his daggers, and bowls.
Resolv'd that in buskins no hero shall stalk,
He has shut us quite out of the tragedy walk.
No blood, no blank-verse!—and in short we're undone,
Unless you're contented with frolic and fun.

If tir'd of her round in the Ranelagh-mill,
There should be but one female inclin'd to sit still;

* Mr. GARRICK, at this time, had let his playhouse for the summer months.

If blind to the beauties, or sick of the squall,
A party should shun to catch cold at Vauxhall;
If at Sadler's sweet Wells *the made wine should be thick,*
The cheese-cakes turn sour, or Miss Wilkinson *sick;*
If the fume of the pipes should oppress you in June,
Or the tumblers be lame, or the bells out of tune;
I hope you will call at our warehouse in Drury;
We've a curious assortment of goods, I assure you;
Domestic and foreign, and all kinds of wares;
English *cloths,* Irish *linen, and* French *petenlairs!*

If for want of good custom, or losses in trade,
The poetical partners should bankrupts be made;
If from dealings too large, we plunge deeply in debt,
And WHEREAS *issue out in the* Muses' *Gazette;*
We'll on you our assigns *for* CERTIFICATES *call;*
Though insolvent, we're honest, and give up our all.

Dramatis Personae.

DRURY-LANE.

	Men.
Sir JOHN RESTLESS,	Mr. Wroughton.
BEVERLEY,	Mr. Kemble.
Sir WILLIAM BELLMONT,	Mr. Phillimore.
Young BELLMONT,	Mr. Barrymore.
BLANDFORD,	Mr. Packer.
ROBERT, *servant to Sir* John,	Mr. Waldron.
BRUSH, *servant to* Beverley,	Mr. Burton.
	Women.
Lady RESTLESS,	Mrs. Ward.
BELINDA,	Miss Farren.
CLARISSA,	Miss Collins.
TATTLE,	Mrs. Wilson.
TIPPET,	Miss Barnes.
MARMALET,	Miss Tidswell.

COVENT-GARDEN.

	Men.
Sir JOHN RESTLESS,	Mr. Ryder.
BEVERLEY,	Mr. Lewis.
Sir WILLIAM BELLMONT,	Mr. Thompson.
Young BELLMONT,	Mr. Davies.
BLANDFORD,	Mr. Fearon.
ROBERT, *servant to Sir* John,	Mr. Booth.
BRUSH, *servant to* Beverley,	Mr. Wewitzer.
	Women.
Lady RESTLESS,	Mrs. Mattocks.
BELINDA,	Mrs. Pope.
CLARISSA,	Mrs. Mountain.
TATTLE,	Mrs. Davenett.
TIPPET,	Miss Platt.
MARMALET,	Miss Stuart.

ALL IN THE WRONG.

ACT I. SCENE I.

The Park. Enter Sir JOHN RESTLESS *and* ROBERT, *from a House in the Side Scene.*

Sir John.

SIR John Restless! Sir John Restless! thou hast played the fool with a vengeance. What devil whispered thee to marry such a woman?——Robert, you have been a faithful servant, and I value you. Did your lady go out at this door here into the Park, or did she go out at the street-door?

Rob. This door, sir.

Sir John. Robert, I will never live in a house again that has two doors to it.

Rob. Sir!

Sir John. I will give warning to my landlord instantly. The eyes of Argus are not sufficient to watch the motions of a wife, where there is a street-door, and a back-door, to favour her escapes.

Rob. Upon my word, sir, I wish—you will pardon my boldness, sir,—I wish you would shake off this uneasiness that preys upon your spirits. It grieves me to the heart,—it does, indeed, sir, to see you in

this way: banish your suspicions: you have conceived some strange aversion, I am afraid, to my lady, sir.

Sir John. No, Robert; no aversion: in spite of me I dote upon her still.

Rob. Then why will you not think generously, sir, of the person you love? My lady, I dare be sworn—

Sir John. Is false to me. That embitters my whole life. I love her, and she repays me with ingratitude, with perfidy, with falsehood, with——

Rob. I dare be sworn, sir, she is a woman of honour.

Sir John. Robert, I have considered you as a friend in my house: don't you betray me too: don't attempt to justify her.

Rob. Dear sir, if you will but give me leave: you have been an indulgent master to me, and I am only concerned for your welfare. You married my lady for love, and I have heard you so warm in her praise: why will you go back from those sentiments?

Sir John. Yes, I married her for love—Oh! love! love! what mischief dost thou not occasion in this world? Yes, Robert, I married her for love. When first I saw her, I was not so much struck with her beauty, as with that air of an ingenuous mind that appeared in her countenance; her features did not so much charm me with their symmetry, as that expression of sweetness, that smile that indicated affability, modesty, and compliance. But, honest Robert, I was deceived: I was not a month married,

when I saw her practising those very smiles at her glass: I saw through the artifice; plainly saw there was nothing natural in her manner, but all forced, all studied, put on with her head-dress: I was alarmed; I resolved to watch her from that moment, and I have seen such things!

Rob. Upon my word, sir, I believe you wrong her, and wrong yourself: you build on groundless surmises; you make yourself unhappy, and my lady too; and by being constantly uneasy, and never shewing her the least love, you'll forgive me, sir,—you fill her mind with strange suspicions, and so the mischief is done.

Sir John. Suspicions, Robert?

Rob. Yes, sir, strange suspicions!—My lady finds herself treated with no degree of tenderness; she infers that your inclinations are fixed elsewhere, and so she is become—you will pardon my blunt honesty—she is become downright jealous,—as jealous as yourself, sir.

Sir John. Oh! Robert, you are little read in the arts of women; you little know the intricacies of their conduct; the mazes through which they walk, shifting, turning, winding, running into devious paths, but tending all through a labyrinth to the temple of Venus. You cannot see, that all her pretences to suspect me of infidelity are merely a counter-plot to cover her own loose designs: it is but a gauze covering, though; it is seen through, and only serves to shew her guilt the more.

Rob. Upon my word, Sir John, I cannot see——

Sir John. No, Robert; I know you cann't. Her suspicions of me all make against her; they are female stratagems, and yet it is but too true that she still is near my heart. Oh! Robert, Robert, when I have watched her at a play, or elsewhere; when I have counted her oglings, and her whisperings, her stolen glances, and her artful leer, with the cunning of her sex, she has pretended to be as watchful of me: dissembling, false, deceitful woman!

Rob. And yet, I dare assure you——

Sir John. No more; I am not to be deceived; I know her thoroughly, and now,—now—has not she escaped out of my house, even now?

Rob. But with no bad design.

Sir John. I am the best judge of that: which way did she go?

Rob. Across the Park, sir; that way towards the Horse Guards.

Sir John. Towards the Horse Guards!——there,—there,—there, the thing is evident: you may go in, Robert.

Rob. Indeed, sir, I——

Sir John. Go in, I say; go in.

Rob. There is no persuading him to his own good. [*Exit.*

Sir John. [*Alone.*] Gone towards the Horse Guards! my head aches; my forehead burns; I am cutting my horns. Gone towards the Horse Guards!—I'll pursue her thither; if I find her, the time, the place,

all will inform against her. Sir John! Sir John; you were a madman to marry such a woman. [*Exit.*

Enter BEVERLEY *and* BELLMONT, *at opposite Sides.*

Bev. Ha! my dear Bellmont? A fellow sufferer in love is a companion well met.

Bel. Beverley, I rejoice to see you.

Bev. Well! I suppose the same cause has brought us both into the Park: both come to sigh our amorous vows in the friendly gloom of yonder walk. Belinda keeps a perpetual war of love and grief, and hope and fear in my heart: and let me see—[*Lays his hand on* Bellmont's *breast.*] how fares all here? I fancy my sister is a little busy with you.

Bel. Busy! she makes a perfect riot there. Not one wink the whole night. Oh! Clarissa, her form so animated! her eyes so——

Bev. Pr'ythee! truce; I have not leisure to attend to her praise: a sister's praise too! the greatest merit I ever could see in Clarissa is, that she loves you freely and sincerely.

Bel. And to be even with you, sir, your Belinda! upon my soul, notwithstanding all your lavish praises, her highest perfection, in my mind, is her sensibility to the merit of my friend.

Bev. Oh! Bellmont! such a girl!

Scarce can I to Heav'n excuse
The devotion which I use
Unto that adored dame!

But tell me honestly now, do you think she has ever betrayed the least regard for me?

Bel. How can you, who have such convincing proofs, how can you ask such a question? That uneasiness of yours, that inquietude of mind——

Bev. Pr'ythee don't fix that character upon me.

Bel. It is your character, my dear Beverley: instead of enjoying the object before you, your are ever looking back to something past, or conjecturing about something to come, and are your own self-tormentor.

Bev. No, no, no; don't be so severe: I hate the very notion of such a temper: the thing is, when a man loves tenderly as I do, solicitude and anxiety are natural; and when Belinda's father opposes my warmest wishes——

Bel. Why yes, the good Mr. Blandford is willing to give her in marriage to me.

Bev. The senseless old dotard!

Bel. Thank you for the compliment! and my father, the wise Sir William Bellmont——

Bev. Is a tyrannical, positive, headstrong——

Bel. There again I thank you. But in short the old couple, Belinda's father and mine, have both agreed upon the match. They insist upon compliance from their children; so that, according to their wise heads, I am to be married off-hand to Belinda, and you and your sister, poor Clarissa, are to be left to shift for yourselves.

Bev. Racks and torments!

Bel. Racks and torment!—Seas of milk and ships of amber, man!—We are sailing to our wished for harbour, in spite of their machinations. I have settled the whole affair with Clarissa.

Bev. Have you?

Bel. I have, and to-morrow morning makes me possessor of her charms.

Bev. My dear boy, give us your hand: and then, thou dear rogue, and then Belinda's mine! *Loll-toll-loll.*

Bel. Well, may you be in raptures, sir; for here, here, here they both come.

Enter BELINDA, *and* CLARISSA.

Bev. Grace was in all her steps; heav'n in her eye;
In every gesture dignity and love.——

Belin. A poetical reception truly!—But cann't your passion inspire you to a composition of your own, Mr. Beverley?

Bev. It inspires me with sentiments, madam, which I cann't find words to express. Suckling, Waller, Landsdown, and all our dealers in love-verses, give but a faint image of a heart touched like mine.

Belin. Poor gentleman! what a terrible taking you are in! But if the sonneteers cannot give an image of you, sir, have you had recourse to a painter, as you promised me?

Bev. I have, Belinda, and here,——here is the humble portrait of your adorer.

Belin. [*Takes the picture.*] Well! there is a likeness;

but after all, there is a better painter than this gentleman, whoever he be.

Bev. A better!——now she is discontented. [*Aside.*] Where, madam, can a better be found?——If money can purchase him——

Belin. Oh! sir, when he draws for money he never succeeds. But when pure inclination prompts him, then his colouring is warm indeed. He gives a portrait that endears the original.——

Bev. Such an artist is worth the Indies!

Belin. You need not go so far to seek him: he has done your business already. The limner I mean is a certain little blind god, called Love, and he has stamped such an impression of you here—

Bev. Madam, your most obedient: and I can tell you, that the very same gentleman has been at work for you too.——

Bel. [*Who had been talking apart with* Clarissa.] Oh! he has had a world of business upon his hands, for we two have been agreeing what havock he has made with us.

Cla. Yes, but we are but in a kind of fool's paradise here: all our schemes are but mere castle-building, which your father, Mr. Bellmont, and my dear Belinda,—yours too are most obstinately determined to destroy.

Bel. Why, as you say, they are determined that I shall have the honour of Belinda's hand in the country-dance of matrimony.

Belin. Without considering that I may like another partner better.

Bev. And without considering that I, forlorn as I am, and my sister, there—who is as well inclined to a matrimonial game of romps as any girl in Christendom, must both of us sit down, and bind our brows with willow, in spite of our strongest inclinations to mingle in the groupe.

Bel. But we have planned our own happiness, and with a little resolution we shall be successful in the end, I warrant you. Clarissa, let us take a turn this way, and leave that love-sick pair to themselves: they are only fit company for each other, and we may find wherewithal to entertain ourselves.

Cla. Let us try: turn this way.

Belin. Are you going to leave us, Clarissa?

Cla. Only just sauntering into this side-walk: we sha'n't lose one another.

Belin. You are such a tender couple! you are not tired I see of saying pretty soft things to each other. Well, well! take your own way.

Cla. And if I guess right, you are glad to be left together.

Belin. Who, I?

Cla. Yes, you; the coy Belinda!

Belin. Not I truly: let us walk together.

Cla. No, no, by no means: you shall be indulged. Adieu!—we shall be within call. [*Ex.* Bel. *and* Cla.

Bev. My sister is generously in love with Bellmont: I wish Belinda would act as openly towards me. [*Aside.*

Belin. Well, sir!—Thoughtful! I'll call Mr. Bellmont back, if that is the case.

Bev. She will call him back. [*Aside.*

Belin. Am I to entertain you, or you me?

Bev. Madam!

Belin. Madam!—ha, ha! why, you look as if you were frightened: are you afraid of being left alone with me?

Bev. Oh! Belinda, you know that is the happiness of my life;—but——

Belin. But what, sir?

Bev. Have I done any thing to offend you?

Belin. To offend me?

Bev. I should have been of the party last night; I own I should; it was a sufficient inducement to me that you was to be there; it was my fault, and you, I see, are piqued at it.

Belin. I piqued!

Bev. I see you are; and the company perceived it last night. I have heard it all: in mere resentment you directed all your discourse to Mr. Bellmont.

Belin. If I did, it was merely accidental.

Bev. No, it was deliberately done: forgive my rash folly in refusing the invitation: I meant no manner of harm.

Belin. Who imagines you did, sir?——

Bev. I beg your pardon, Belinda: you take offence too lightly.

Belin. Ha, ha! what have you taken into your head

now? This uneasiness is of your own making: I have taken nothing ill, sir.

Bev. You could not but take it ill; but by all that's amiable about you, I meant not to incur your displeasure: forgive that abrupt answer I sent: I should have made a handsomer apology.

Belin. Apology!—you was engaged, was not you?

Bev. I said so; I own it, and beg your pardon——

Belin. Beg my pardon! for what? Ha, ha!

Bev. I only meant——

Belin. Ha, ha! can you think I see any thing in your message to be offended at, sir?

Bev. I was wrong: I beg your pardon. Where you were concerned, I own I should have expressed myself with more delicacy, than those hasty words, I am engaged, and cann't wait upon you to-night. I should have told you that my heart was with you, though necessity dragged me another way: this omission you resented. I could learn, since, what spirits you were in the whole evening, though I enjoyed nothing in your absence. I could hear the sallies of your wit, the sprightliness of your conversation, and on whom your eyes were fixed the whole night.

Belin. They were fixed upon Mr. Bellmont, you think!

Bev. Ay! and fixed with delight upon him, negociating the business of love before the whole company.

Belin. Upon my word, sir, whoever is your author, you are misinformed. You alarm me with these fan-

cies, and you know I have often told you that you are of too refining a temper: you create for yourself imaginary misunderstandings, and then are ever entering into explanations. But this watching for intelligence, from the spies and misrepresenters of conversation, betrays strong symptoms of jealousy. I would not be married to a jealous man for the world.

Bev. Now she's seeking occasion to break off. [*Aside.*]—Jealousy, ma'am, can never get admission into my breast. I am of too generous a temper: a certain delicacy I own I have; I value the opinion of my friends, and when there are circumstances of a doubtful aspect, I am glad to set things in their true light. And if I do so with others, surely with you, on whom my happiness depends, to desire a favourable interpretation of my words and actions cannot be improper.

Belin. But these little humours may grow up, and gather into the fixed disease of jealousy at last. [*Lady* Restless *crosses the stage, and rings a bell at the door.*] And there now,—there goes a lady who is a victim to her own fretful imagination.

Bev. Who is the lady, pray?

Belin. My Lady Restless. Walk this way, and I will give you her whole character. I am not acquainted with her ladyship, but I have heard much of her. This way. [*Exit* Belinda *and* Beverley.

Lady Rest. [*Ringing at the door.*] What do these servants mean? There is something going forward here. I will be let in, or I will know the reason

why. [*Rings again.*] But in the mean time, Sir John can let any body he pleases out at the street-door: I'll run up the steps here, and observe. [*Exit.*

TATTLE *opens the door,* MARMALET *follows her.*

Tat. Who rung this bell?—I don't see any body; and yet I am sure the bell rung. Well, Mrs. Marmalet, you will be going, I see.

Mar. Yes, Mrs. Tattle; I am obliged to leave you. I'll step across the Park, and I shall soon reach Grosvenor-Square. When shall I see you at our house?

Tat. Heaven knows when I shall be able to get out: my lady leads us all such lives! I wish I had such another place as you have of it.

Mar. I have nothing to complain of.

Tat. No, that you have not: when shall I get such a gown as that you have on by my lady? She will never fling off such a thing, and give it to a poor servant! Worry, worry, worry herself, and every body else too.

Re-enter Lady RESTLESS.

Lady Rest. No; there is nobody stirring that way. What do I see? A hussey coming out of my house!

Mar. Well, I must be gone, Mrs. Tattle: fare you well.

Lady Rest. She is dizen'd out too! why did not you open the door, Tattle, when I rung?

Tat. I came as soon as possible, madam.

Lady Rest. Who have you with you here? What is your business, mistress? [*To* Marmalet.

Mar. My business, madam?

Lady Rest. In confusion too! The case is plain. You come here after Sir John, I suppose.

Mar. I come after Sir John, madam?

Lady Rest. Guilt in her face! Yes, after Sir John: and, Tattle, you are in the plot against me; you were favouring her escape, were you?

Tat. I favour her escape, madam? What occasion for that? This is Mrs. Marmalet, madam; an acquaintance of mine, madam; as good a kind of body as any at all.

Lady Rest. Oh! very fine, mistress! you bring your creatures after the vile man, do you?

Mar. I assure you, madam, I am a very honest girl.

Lady Rest. Oh! I dare say so. Where did you get that gown.

Mar. La, ma'am! I came by it honestly; my Lady Conquest gave it to me. I live with my Lady Conquest, madam.

Lady Rest. What a complexion she has! How long have you lived in London?

Mar. Three years, madam.

Lady Rest. In London three years with that complexion! it cann't be: perhaps she is painted: all these creatures paint. You are all so many painted dolls. [*Rubs her face with a white handkerchief.*] No, it does not come off. So, Mrs. Tattle, you

bring your fresh country girls here to my house, do you?

Tat. Upon my credit, ma'am—

Lady Rest. Don't tell me: I see through this affair. Go you about your business, mistress, and let me never see you about my doors again: go, go your ways.

Mar. Lord, ma'am, I shan't trouble your house. Mrs. Tattle, a good day. Here's a deal to-do, indeed! I have as good a house as hers to go to, whatever she may think of herself. [*Exit.*

Lady Rest. There, there, there; see there; she goes off in a huff! the way with them all. Ay! I see how it is, Tattle: you false, ungrateful—that gown was never given her by a woman, she had that from Sir John. Where is Sir John?

Tat. Sir John an't at home, ma'am.

Lady Rest. Where is he? Where is he gone?—When did he go out?

Tat. I really don't know, ma'am.

Lady Rest. Tattle, I know you fib now. But I'll sift this to the bottom. I'll write to my Lady Conquest to know the truth about that girl that was here but now.

Tat. You will find I told you truth, madam.

Lady Rest. Very well, Mrs. Pert. I'll go and write this moment. Send Robert, to give me an account of his master. Sir John, Sir John, you will distract me.

[*Exeunt.*

Re-enter BELINDA *and* BEVERLEY.

Belin. Ay! but that quickness, that extreme sensibility is what I am afraid of. I positively would not have a jealous husband for the world.

Bev. By heaven no earthly circumstance shall ever make me think injuriously of you. Jealousy!—— ha, ha!—it is the most ridiculous passion!—ha, ha!

Belin. You may laugh, sir; but I know your over-refining temper too well, and I absolutely will have it in our marriage-articles, that I must not be plagued with your suspicions.

Bev. I subscribe, ma'am.

Belin. I will have no enquiries where I am going to visit: no following me from place to place: and if we should chance to meet, and you should perceive a man of wit, or a pretty fellow, speaking to me, I will not have you fidgetting about on your chair, knitting your brow, and looking at your watch—'My dear, is it not time to go home?—my love, the coach is waiting:'—and then, if you are prevailed upon to stay, I will not have you converse with a 'Yes, sir,' and a 'No, sir,' for the rest of the evening, and then wrangle with me in the carriage all the way home, and not be commonly civil to me for the rest of the night. I positively will have none of this.

Bev. Agreed, ma'am, agreed——

Belin. And you shan't tell me you are going out of town, and then steal privately to the play, or to Ra-

nelagh, merely to be a spy upon me. I positively will admit no curiosity about my letters. If you were to open a letter of mine, I should never forgive you. I do verily believe, if you were to open my letters I should hate you.

Bev. I subscribe to every thing you can ask. You shall have what female friends you please; lose your money to whom you please; dance with what beau you please; ride out with whom you please; go to what china-shop you please; and, in short, do what you please, without my attempting to bribe your footmen or your maid for secret intelligence.

Belin. Oh, lud! Oh, lud! that is in the very strain of jealousy. Deliver me! there is my father yonder, and Sir William Bellmont with him. Fly this instant, fly, Mr. Beverley, down that walk; any where.

Bev. You promise then——

Belin. Don't talk to me now: what would you be at? I am yours, and only yours, unalterably so. Fly, begone, leave me this moment.

Bev. I obey: I am gone. [*Exit.*

Belin. Now they are putting their wise heads together to thwart all my schemes of happiness: but love, imperious love, will have it otherwise.

Enter Mr. BLANDFORD *and Sir* WILLIAM BELLMONT.

Bland. Sir William, since we have agreed upon every thing——

Sir Will. Why yes, Mr. Blandford, I think every thing is settled.

Bland. Why then we have only to acquaint the young people with our intentions, and so conclude the affair without delay.

Sir Will. That is all, sir.

Bland. As to my girl, I don't mind her nonsense about Beverley: she must do as I will have her.

Sir Will. And my son too, he must follow my directions. As to his telling me of his love for Clarissa, it is all a joke with me. Children must do as their parents will have them.

Bland. Ay, so they must; and so they shall. Hey! here is my daughter. So, Belinda!——Well, my girl, Sir William and I have agreed, and you are to prepare for marriage, that's all.

Belin. With Mr. Beverley, sir?

Bland. Mr. Beverley!

Belin. You know you encouraged him yourself, sir.

Bland. Well, well! I have changed my mind on that head: my friend, Sir William, here offers you his son. Do as I advise you: have a care, Belinda, how you disobey my commands.

Belin. But, sir——

Bland. But, madam, I must and will be obeyed. You don't like him, you say: but I like him, and that's sufficient for you.

Sir Will. And so it is, Mr. Blandford. If my son pretended to have a will of his own, I should let him know to the contrary.

Belin. And can you, Sir William, against our inclination force us both?

Bland. Hold your tongue, Belinda; don't provoke me. What makes you from home? Go your ways back directly, and settle your mind. I tell you once for all I will have my own way. Come, Sir William, we will step to the lawyer's chambers. Go home, Belinda, and be observant of my commands. Come, Sir William. What did you say? [*To* Belinda.] You mutiny, do you? Don't provoke me. You know, Belinda, I am an odd sort of man when provok'd. Look ye here: mind what I say; I won't reason with you about the matter; my power is absolute, and if you offer to rebel, you shall have no husband at all with my consent. I'll cut you off with a shilling; I'll see you starve; beg an alms; live miserable; die wretched; in short, suffer any calamity without the least compassion from me. If I find you an undutiful girl, I cast you off for ever. So there's one word for all. [*Exit: Sir* William *follows him.*

Belin. What will become of me?——his inhumanity overcomes me quite—I can never consent: the very sight of this picture is enough to forbid it. Oh! Beverley, you are master of my heart. I'll go this instant—and—heavens! I can scarce move. I am ready to faint.

Enter Sir JOHN.

Sir John. No tidings of her far or near.

Belin. How I tremble!—I shall fall—no help?

Sir John. What do I see!—a young lady in distress!

Belin. Oh! [*Faints in his arms, and drops the picture.*

Sir John. She is fallen into a fit. Would my servants were in the way.

Lady RESTLESS. *At her Window.*

Lady Rest. Where can this barbarous man be gone to?—How!—under my very window!

Sir John. How cold she is!—quite cold—

[*Lays his hand to her cheek.*

Lady Rest. How familiar he is with her!

Sir John. And yet she looks beautiful still.

Lady Rest. Does she so?

Sir John. Her eyes open—how lovely they look!

Lady Rest. Traitor!

Sir John. Her cheek begins to colour. Well, young lady, how fare you now, my dear?

Lady Rest. My dear too!

Belin. Heavens! where am I?——

Sir John. Repose yourself awhile, or will you step into my house?

Lady Rest. No, truly, sha'n't she. Vile man! but I will spoil your sport. I will come down to you directly, and flash confusion in your face.

[*Exit from above.*

Sir John. Where do you live, madam?

Belin. In Queen's-square, sir, by the side of the Park.

Sir John. I will wait upon you: trust yourself with

me. You look much better now. Lean on my arm. There, there, I will conduct you. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Lady RESTLESS.

Lady Rest. Now I'll make one among ye. How! fled! gone! which way? Is not that he, yonder?—No—he went into my house, I dare say, as I came down stairs. Tattle, Tattle, Robert. Will nobody answer?

Enter TATTLE.

Lady Rest. Where is Sir John?

Tat. La! ma'am, how should I know?

Lady Rest. Did not he go in this moment?

Tat. No, ma'am.

Lady Rest. To be sure you will say so. I'll follow him through the world, or I'll find him out. So, so,—what is here?—This is her picture, I suppose. I will make sure of this at least: this will discover her to me, tho' she has escaped now. Cruel, false, deceitful man! [*Exit.*

Tat. Poor lady! I believe her head is turned, for my part. Well! I am determined I'll look out for another place, that's a sure thing I will. [*Exit.*

ACT II. SCENE I.

Sir JOHN's *House. Enter Sir* JOHN *and* ROBERT.

Sir John.

ROBERT, where is your lady?

Rob. In her own room, sir.

Sir John. Any body with her?

Rob. I cann't say, sir: my lady is not well.

Sir John. Not well! fatigued with rioting about this town, I suppose. How long has she been at home?

Rob. About an hour, sir.

Sir John. About an hour!—very well, Robert, you may retire. [*Exit* Robert.] Now will I question her closely. So—so—so—she comes, leaning on her maid: finely dissembled! finely dissembled! But this pretended illness shall not shelter her from my strict enquiry. Soft a moment! If I could overhear what passes between 'em, it might lead to the truth. I'll work by stratagem. The hypocrite! how she acts her part! [*Exit.*

Enter Lady RESTLESS *and* TATTLE.

Tat. How are you now, madam?

Lady Rest. Somewhat better, Tattle. Reach that chair. Tattle, tell me honestly, does that girl live with Lady Conquest?

Tat. She does, madam, upon my veracity.

Lady Rest. Very well! you will be obstinate, I see, but I shall know the truth presently. I shall have an answer from her ladyship, and then all will come out.

Tat. You will hear nothing, ma'am, but what I have told you already.

Lady Rest. Tattle, Tattle, I took you up in the country in hopes gratitude would make you my friend. But you are as bad as the rest of them. Conceal all you know: it is of very little consequence. I now see through the whole affair. Though it is the picture of a man, yet I am not to be deceived: I understand it all. This is some former gallant. The creature gave this to Sir John as a proof that she had no affection for any one but himself.—What art he must have had to induce her to this!—I have found him out at last.

Sir JOHN, *peeping in.*

Sir John. What does she say?

Lady Rest. I have seen enough to convince me what kind of man he is. The fate of us poor women is hard: we all wish for husbands, and they are the torment of our lives.

Tat. There is too much truth in what you say, ma'am.

Sir John. You join her, do you, Mrs. Iniquity?

Lady Rest. What a pity it is, Tattle, that poor women should be under severer restraints than the men are!

Sir John. You repine for want of freedom, do you?

Lady Rest. Cruel laws of wedlock! The tyrant-husband may triumph in his infidelity. He may securely trample upon all laws of decency and order: it redounds to his credit; gives him a fashionable air of vice, while a poor woman is obliged to submit to his cruelty. She remains tied to him for life, even though she has reason to entertain a mortal hatred for him.

Sir John. Oh! very well argued, madam!

Lady Rest. What a pity it is, Tattle, that we cannot change our husbands, as we do our ear-rings or our gloves!

Sir John. There is a woman of spirit!

Lady Rest. Tattle! will you own the truth to me about that girl?

Tat. I really have told you the truth, madam.

Lady Rest. You won't discover, I see: very well! you may go down stairs.

Tat. I assure your ladyship——

Lady Rest. Go down stairs.

Tat. Yes, ma'am. [*Exit.*

Lady Rest. Would I had never seen my husband's face!

Sir John. I am even with you: I have as good wishes for you, I assure you.

Lady Rest. This picture here—Oh the base man!

Sir John. The picture of her gallant, I suppose.

Lady Rest. This is really a handsome picture: what a charming countenance! it is perfumed, I fancy: the scent is agreeable.

Act 2.

Burney del. *Leney sculp.*

London. Printed for J. Bell, British Library, Strand, May 5. 1792.

Sir John. The jade, how eagerly she looked!

Lady Rest. Why had I not such a dear, dear kind, instead of the brute, the monster——

Sir John. Monster!—She does not mince the matter: plain downright English! I must consult my visage, and steal upon her meditations.—So——

[*Leans on table.*

Lady Rest. There is no falsehood in that face.

Sir John. [*Looking over her shoulder.*] Oh! what a handsome dog she has chosen for herself!

Lady Rest. With you, I could be for ever happy!

Sir John. You could, could you?

[*Snatches the picture.*

Lady Rest. [*Screams out.*] Mercy on me!—Oh! is it you, sir?

Sir John. Now, madam, now, false one, have I caught you?

Lady Rest. You are come home at last, I find, sir.

Sir John. My Lady Restless, my Lady Restless, what can you say for yourself now?

Lady Rest. What can I say for myself, Sir John?

Sir John. Ay, madam! this picture——

Lady Rest. Yes, sir, that picture?

Sir John. Will be evidence——

Lady Rest. Of your shame, Sir John.

Sir John. Of my shame!—'tis very true, madam, she might: yes, madam, it will be an evidence of my shame; I feel that but too sensibly. But oh, that——

Lady Rest. You own it then, do you?

Burney del. *Leney sculp.*

London. Printed for J. Bell, British Library, Strand, May 5. 1792.

Sir John. The jade, how eagerly she kisses it!

Lady Rest. Why had I not such a dear, dear man, instead of the brute, the monster——

Sir John. Monster!—She does not mince the matter: plain downright English! I must contain my rage, and steal upon her meditations—So—so—so—

[*Enters on tiptoe.*

Lady Rest. There is no falsehood in this look.

Sir John. [*Looking over her shoulder.*] Oh! what a handsome dog she has chosen for herself!

Lady Rest. With you, I could be for ever happy!

Sir John. You could, could you?

[*Snatches the picture.*

Lady Rest. [*Screams out.*] Mercy on me!—Oh! is it you, sir?

Sir John. Now, madam, now, false one, have I caught you?

Lady Rest. You are come home at last, I find, sir.

Sir John. My Lady Restless, my Lady Restless, what can you say for yourself now?

Lady Rest. What can I say for myself, Sir John?

Sir John. Ay, madam! this picture——

Lady Rest. Yes, sir, that picture!

Sir John. Will be evidence——

Lady Rest. Of your shame, Sir John.

Sir John. Of my shame!—'tis very true what she says: yes, madam, it will be an evidence of my shame; I feel that but too sensibly. But on your part——

Lady Rest. You own it then, do you?

Sir John. Own it! I must own it, madam; though confusion cover me, I must own it: it is what you have deserved at my hands.

Lady Rest. I deserve it, Sir John! find excuses if you will. Cruel, cruel man!——to make me this return at last. I cannot bear it. Oh! oh! [*Cries.*] Such black injustice!

Sir John. You may weep; but your tears are lost: they fall without effect. I now renounce you for ever. This picture will justify me to the wide world; it will shew what a base woman you have been.

Lady Rest. What does the man mean?

Sir John. The picture of your gallant, madam! the darling of your amorous hours, who gratifies your luxurious appetites abroad, and——

Lady Rest. Scurrilous wretch! Oh! sir, you are at your old stratagem, I find: recrimination, you think, will serve your turn.

Sir John. It is a pity, you know, madam, that a woman should be tied to a man for life, even though she has a mortal hatred for him.

Lady Rest. Artful hypocrite!

Sir John. That she cann't change her husband as she does her ear-rings or her gloves.

Lady Rest. Sir John, this is your old device: this won't avail you.

Sir John. Had the original of this fallen to your lot, you could kiss the picture for ever. You can gloat upon it, madam, glue your very lips to it.

Lady Rest. Shallow artifice!

Sir John. With him you could be for ever happy.

Lady Rest. This is all in vain, Sir John.

Sir John. Had such a dear, dear man fallen to your lot, instead of the brute, the monster—Am I a monster? I am, and you have made me so. The world shall know your infamy.

Lady Rest. Oh! brave it out, sir, brave it out to the last: harmless, innocent man! you have nothing to blush for, nothing to be ashamed of: you have no intrigues, no private amours abroad. I have not seen any thing, not I.

Sir John. Madam, I have seen, and I now see your paramour.

Lady Rest. That air of confidence will be of great use to you, sir. You have no convenient to meet you under my very window, to loll softly in your arms!

Sir John. Hey! how!

Lady Rest. Her arm thrown carelessly round your neck! Your hand tenderly applied to her cheek.

Sir John. 'Sdeath! that's unlucky—she will turn it against me. [*Aside.*

Lady Rest. You are in confusion, are you, sir? But why should you? You meant no harm—'You are safe with me, my dear—will you step into my house, my love?'—Yes, sir, you would fain bring her into my very house.

Sir John. My Lady Restless, this evasion is mean and paultry. You beheld a young lady in distress.

Lady Rest. I know it, and you, tender-hearted

man, could caress her out of mere compassion: you could gaze wantonly out of charity; from pure benevolence of disposition you could convey her to some convenient dwelling. Oh! Sir John, Sir John!

Sir John. Madam, this well-acted passion——

Lady Rest. Don't imagine she has escaped me, sir.

Sir John. You may talk and rave, ma'am; but, depend upon it, I shall spare no pains to do myself justice on this occasion. Nor will I rest till——

Lady Rest. Oh! fie upon you, Sir John: these artifices——

Sir John. Nor will I rest, madam, until I have found, by means of this instrument here in my hand, who your darling is. I will go about it straight. Ungrateful, treacherous woman! [*Exit.*

Lady Rest. Yes, go, under that pretext, in pursuit of your licentious pleasures. This ever has been his scheme to cloak his wicked practices: abandoned man! to face me down too, after what my eyes so plainly beheld! I wish I could wring that secret out of Tattle. I'll step to my own room directly, and try by menaces, by wheedling, by fair means, by foul means, by every means, to wrest it from her.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.

The Park. Enter Sir JOHN *and* ROBERT.

Sir John. Come hither, Robert. Look at this picture.

Rob. Yes, sir.

Sir John. Let me watch his countenance. Well! well! dost thou know it, Robert?

Rob. 'Tis a mighty handsome picture, sir.

Sir John. A handsome picture!—— [*Aside.*

Rob. The finest lady in the land need not desire a handsomer man, sir.

Sir John. How well he knows the purposes of it! —Well! well! honest Robert, tell me: well—who is it?—tell me,

Rob. Sir!

Sir John. You know whose picture it is: I know you do. Well! well! who—who—who is it?

Rob. Upon my word, sir, it is more than I can tell.

Sir John. Not know! I am convinced you do. So own the truth: don't be a villain; don't.

Rob. As I am an honest man, sir——

Sir John. Be an honest man then, and tell me. Did you never see such a smooth-faced, fiery-eyed, warm-complexioned, taper young fellow here about my house?

Rob. Never, sir.

Sir John. Not with my wife!—to drink chocolate of a morning, tea of an evening? Come, honest Robert, I'll give you a lease of a good farm. What say you? A lease for your life—well! well!—you may take your wife's life into the bargain. Well!

Rob. Believe me, Sir John, I never saw——

Sir John. I'll add your child's life. Come, speak

out—your own life, your wife's life, and your child's! now! now! a lease for three lives! Now, Robert!

Rob. As I hope for mercy, I never saw any such a gentleman.

Sir John. Robert, Robert, you are bribed by my wife.

Rob. No, as I am a sinner, sir.

Sir John. And the worst of sinners you will be, if you are a confederate in this plot against my peace and honour. Reflect on that, Robert.

Enter a Footman.

Foot. Pray, does not Sir John Restless live somewhere hereabout?

Sir John. He does, friend; what is your business with him?

Foot. My business is with his lady.

Sir John. I guessed as much. [*Aside.*

Foot. I have a letter here for my Lady Restless, sir.

Sir John. A letter for my lady!—from whom, pray?

Foot. From my Lord Conquest.

Sir John. My Lord Conquest! very well, friend: you may give the letter to me. I am Sir John Restless: that there is my house. Let me have the letter: I will take care of it.

Foot. I was ordered to deliver it into my lady's own hand.

Sir John. The devil you was! I must have the let-

ter. I'll buy it of the rascal. [*Aside.*] Here, take this for your trouble, friend, [*Gives him money.*] And I'll take care of the letter.

Foot. I humbly thank your honour. [*Exit.*

Sir John. Now, now, now; let me see what this is. Now, my Lady Restless; now false one, now. [*Reads.*

'MADAM,

'My Lady Conquest being gone into the country for a few days, I have judged it proper to send a speedy answer to yours, and to assure you, for your peace of mind, that you need not entertain the least suspicion of Marmalet, my lady's woman. She has lived some years in my family, and I know her by experience to be an honest, trusty girl, incapable of making mischief between your ladyship and Sir John.

I have the honour to be,

Madam, your very humble servant,

CONQUEST.'

So, so, so!—Marmalet is a trusty girl! one that will not make mischief between man and wife! that is to say, she will discover nothing against my Lady Restless! for her peace of mind he lets madam know all this too! she may go on boldly now; my Lady Conquest is gone into the country, Marmalet is trusty, and my lord has given her the most speedy notice. Very well! very well! proofs thicken upon proofs. Shall I go directly and challenge his lordship?—— No—no—that won't do. Watch him closely, that will do better. If I could have a word in private with the maid—Robert, Robert, come hither. Step

to my Lord Conquest's—but with caution proceed—enquire there for Marmalet, the maid.

Rob. I know her, sir.

Sir John. He knows her! [*Aside.*

Rob. She visits our Tattle, sir.

Sir John. Visits our Tattle!—it is a plain case. [*Aside.*] Enquire for that girl: but with caution: tell her to meet me privately; unknown to any body; in the dusk of the evening; in the Bird-Cage walk, yonder.

Rob. I will, sir.

Sir John. And don't let Tattle see her. Tattle has engaged her in her mistress's interest. I see how it is. Don't let any of my servants see her: go directly, Robert. Now shall I judge what regard you have for me. But, hark ye: come hither! a word with you. Should it be known that this girl converses with me; should my lady have the least item of it, they will be upon their guard. Let her come wrapped up in darkness: concealed from every observer, with a mask on. Ay, let it be with a mask.

Rob. A mask, Sir John? Won't that make her be remarked the more?

Sir John. No, no, let her come masked; I will make every thing sure. Robert, bring this about for me, and I am your friend for ever.

Rob. I will do my endeavour, sir. [*Exit.*

Sir John. I'll now take a turn round the Park, and try if I can find the minion this picture belongs to.

[*Exit.*

Enter BEVERLEY *and* BELLMONT.

Bev. Yes, they had almost surprised us: but at sight of her father, Belinda gave the word, and away I darted down towards the canal.

Bel. Was Sir William with him?

Bev. Yes; they had been plotting our ruin. But we shall out-officer them, it is to be hoped.

Bel. Yes, and it is also to be feared that we shall not.

Bev. Hey! you alarm, me: no new mine sprung!

Bel. Nothing but the old story. Our wise fathers are determined. At the turning of yonder corner they came both full tilt upon Clarissa and me.

Bev. Well, and how! what passed?

Bel. Why, they were scarcely civil to your sister. Sir William fixed his surly eye upon me for some time: at last he began: you will run counter to my will, I see: you will be ever dangling after that girl: but Mr. Blandford and I have agreed upon the match: and then he peremptorily commanded me to take my leave of Clarissa, and fix my heart upon your Belinda.

Bev. And did you so?

Bel. And did you so? How can you ask such a question? Sir, says I, I must see the lady home, and off I marched, arm in arm, with her, my father bawling after me, and I bowing to him, 'Sir, your humble servant, I wish you a good morning, sir.'—

He continued calling out: I kissed my hand to him; and so we made our escape.

Bev. And where have you left Clarissa?

Bel. At home; at your house.

Bev. Well! and do you both continue in the same mind; is to-morrow to be your wedding-day?

Bel. Now are you conjuring up a thousand horrid fancies to torment yourself. But don't be alarmed, my dear Beverley. I shall leave you your Belinda, and content myself with the honour of being your brother-in-law.

Bev. Sir, the honour will be to me—But uneasy!—ha, ha!——no——no—— I am not uneasy, nor shall I ever be so again.

Bel. Keep that resolution, if you can. Do you dine with us at the club?

Bev. With all my heart: I'll attend you.

Bel. That's right; let us turn towards the Mall, and saunter there till dinner.

Bev. No, I cann't go that way yet. I must enquire how Belinda does, and what her father said to her. I have not seen her since we parted in the morning.

Bel. And now, according to custom, you will make her an apology for leaving her, when there was an absolute necessity for it, and you'll fall to an explanation of circumstances that require no explanation at all, and refine upon things, and torment yourself and her into the bargain.

Bev. Nay, if you begin with your raillery, I am off; your servant; *a l'honneur.* [*Exit.*

Bel. [*Alone.*] Poor Beverley!—Tho' a handsome fellow, and of agreeable talents, he has such a strange diffidence in himself, and such a solicitude to please, that he is every moment of his life most ingeniously elaborating his own uneasiness.

Enter Sir JOHN.

Sir John. Not yet, not yet; nobody like it as yet. Ha! who is that hovering about my house?——If that should be he now!——I'll examine him nearer ——Pray, sir—what the devil shall I say?——Pray, sir——

Bel. Sir!

Sir John. I beg pardon for troubling you, sir; but pray what o'clock is it by your watch?

Bel. By my watch, sir!—I'll let you know in a moment.

Sir John. Let me examine him now——

[*Looks at him, and then at the picture.*

Bel. Egad, I am afraid my watch is not right: it must be later. [*Looking at his watch.*

Sir John. It is not like him—[*Comparing the picture.*

Bel. It does not go, I am afraid. [*Puts it to his ear.*

Sir John. The eye——no!

Bel. Why, sir, by my watch it wants a quarter of three.

Sir John. It is not he: and yet—no—no—no—I am still to seek.

Enter BEVERLEY.

Bev. Bellmont! Another word with you.

Sir John. Here comes another; they are all swarming about my house.

Bev. I have seen her; I have seen Belinda, my boy: she will be with Clarissa in the Park immediately after dinner, you rogue.

Sir John. I want to see his face; this may be the original.

Bev. Her father has been rating her in his usual manner; but your marriage with my sister will settle every thing.

Sir John. I'll walk round him. [*Sings.*] Loll toll loll—[*Looks at him.*]—ha! it has his air. [*Sings.*] Loll toll loll,—and it has his eye! Loll toll loll——

[*Walks to and fro.*

Bev. Pr'ythee, Bellmont, don't be such a dangling lover, but consummate at once, for the sake of your friend.

Sir John. It has his nose for all the world.

Bel. Do you spirit your sister up to keep her resolution, and to-morrow puts you out of all pain.

Sir John. Loll toll loll—it has his complexion; the same glowing, hot, amorous complexion.

[*Sings and looks uneasy.*

Bev. Who is this gentleman?

Bel. An odd fellow he seems to be.

Sir John. Loll toll loll—it has his shoulders. Loll

toll loll—Ay, and I fancy the mole upon the cheek too. I wish I could view him nearer: loll toll loll!

Bell. He seems mad, I think. Where are his keepers?

Sir John. Begging your pardon, sir—Pray, [*Looking at the picture.*]—Pray, sir, can you tell whether we shall have a Spanish war?

Bev. Not I truly, sir. [*To* Bellmont.] Here is a politician out of his senses.

Bel. He has been talking to me too: he is too well dressed for a poet.

Bev. Not, if he has had a good subscription.

Sir John. He has the mole sure enough. [*Aside.*

Bev. Let us step this way, to avoid this impertinent blockhead.

Sir John. Ay! he wants to sneak off. Guilt! guilt! conscious guilt! I'll make sure of him. Pray, sir,—I beg your pardon—Is not your name Wildair?

Bev. No, sir, Beverley, at your service.

Sir John. Have you no relation of that name?

Bev. None.

Sir John. You are very like a gentleman of that name—a friend of mine, whose picture I have here—Will you give me leave just to——

[*Compares him with the picture.*

Bev. An odd adventure this, Bellmont.

Bel. Very odd, indeed.

Bev. Do you find any likeness, sir?

Sir John. Your head a little more that way, if you

please. Ay, ay! it is he. Yes, a plain case; this is my man, or rather,—this is my wife's man.

Bev. Did you ever know any thing so whimsical?

Bel. Never——ha, ha, ha!

Sir John. They are both laughing at me. Ay! and I shall be laughed at by the whole town, pointed at, hooted at, and gazed at!

Bev. What do I see? 'Sdeath, the setting of that picture is like what I gave to Belinda. Distraction! if it is the same—— [*Drawing near him.*

Sir John. He makes his approach, and means, I suppose, to snatch it out of my hand. But I'll prevent him, and so into my pocket it goes. There, lie safe there.

Bev. Confusion! he puts it up in a hurry. Will you be so good, sir, as to favour me with a—

Sir John. Sir, I wish you a good day.

Bev. With a sight of that picture for a moment?

Sir John. The picture, sir——Po!—a mere daub.

Bev. A motive of curiosity, sir—

Sir John. It is not worth your seeing. I wish you a good day.

Bev. I shall take it as a favour.

Sir John. A paltry thing. I have not a moment to spare; my family is waiting dinner. Sir, I wish you a good morning. [*Runs into his house.*

Bev. Death and fire! Bellmont, my picture!

Bel. Oh! no—no such thing.

Bev. But I am sure of it. If Belinda—

Bel. What, relapsing into suspicion again!

Bev. Sir, I have reason to suspect. She slights me, disdains me, treats me with contempt.

Bel. But I tell you, that unhappy temper of yours —Pr'ythee, man, leave teasing yourself, and let us adjourn to dinner.

Bev. No, sir; I shan't dine at all. I am not well.

Bel. Ridiculous! how can you be so absurd? I'll bett you twenty pounds that is not your picture.

Bev. Done; I take it.

Bel. With all my heart; and I'll tell you more; if it be yours, I will give you leave to be as jealous of her as you please. Come, now let us adjourn.

Bev. I attend you. In the evening we shall know the truth. If it be that I gave Belinda, she is false, and I am miserable. [*Exeunt.*

Sir JOHN. [*Peeping after them.*]

Sir John. There he goes; there he goes! the destroyer of my peace and happiness!—I'll follow him, and make sure that he has given me the right name; and then, my Lady Restless, the mine is sprung, and I have done with you for ever. [*Exit.*

ACT III. SCENE I.

The former Scene continues. Enter BELINDA *and* CLARISSA.

Belinda.

BUT have you really fixed every thing, Clarissa?

Cla. Positively, and to-morrow morning makes me his.

Belin. To-morrow morning!

Cla. Yes, to-morrow morning I release Mr. Bellmont from his fetters, and resign my person to him.

Belin. Why, that is what we poor women, after all the victories of our charms, all the triumphs of our beauty, and all the murders of our eyes, must come to at last.

Cla. Well, and in that we but imitate the men. Don't we read of them conquering whole kingdoms, and then submitting at last to be governed by the vanquished.

Belin. Very true, Clarissa; and I don't know but you are a heroine equal in fame to any of them; nay superior: for your scheme, I take it, is not to unpeople the world.

Cla. Pr'ythee, don't talk so wildly. To tell you the truth, now that I have settled the affair, I begin to be alarmed at what I have done.

Belin. Oh! dear, dear affectation.

Cla. Actually now, positively, I am terrified to death.

Belin. To be sure:—our sex must play its tricks, and summon up all its fantastic train of doubts and fears. But courage, my dear, don't be frightened; for the same sex within that heart of yours will urge you on, and never let you be at rest, till you have procured yourself a tyrant for life.

Cla. A tyrant, Belinda! I think more generously of Mr. Bellmont, than to imagine he will usurp to himself an ill use of his power.

Belin. To deal candidly I am of your opinion. But tell me now, am not I a very good girl, to resign such a man to you.

Cla. Why, indeed, I must confess the obligation.

Belin. Ay! but to resign him for one whose temper does not promise that I shall live under so mild a government.

Cla. How do you mean?

Belin. Why, Mr. Beverley's strange caprices, suspicions, and unaccountable whimsies, are enough to alarm one upon the brink of matrimony.

Cla. Well, I vow I cann't help thinking, Belinda, that you are a little subject to vain surmises and suspicions yourself.

Belin. Now, you are an insincere girl. You know I am of a temper too generous, too open——

Cla. I grant all that, but by this constant repetition of the same doubts, I should not wonder to see you most heartily jealous of him in the end.

Belin. Jealous!—Oh heavens!—jealous indeed!

Cla. Well, I say no more. As to my brother, here he comes, and let him speak for himself.

Enter BEVERLEY *and* BELLMONT.

Bel. Well argued, sir: you will have it your own way, and I give up the point. Ladies your most obedient. I hope we have not transgressed our time.

Belin. Not in the least; you are both very exact. True as the dial to the sun.

Bev. [*In a peevish manner.*] Although it be not shone upon.

Belin. Although it be not shone upon, Mr. Beverley! why with that dejected air, pray sir?

Bel. There again now! you two are going to commence wrangling lovers once more. Apropos, Belinda——now Beverley, you shall see——be so good, ma'am, as to let me see this gentleman's picture.

Belin. His picture! what can you want it for? You shall have it. [*Searching her pocket.*

Bel. Now, Beverley, do you confess how wrong you have been?

Bev. Why, I begin to see my mistake. Say not a word to her; she'll never forgive me, if you discover my infirmity. [*Apart.*

Belin. It is not in that pocket: it must be here. [*Searches.*

Bel. You have been sad company on account of this strange suspicion.

Bev. I own it; let it drop; say no more. [*Aside.*

Belin. Well, I protest and vow—Where can it be? Come, gentlemen, this is some trick of yours: you have it among ye. Mr. Bellmont, Mr. Beverley, pray return it to me.

Bev. No, ma'am, it is no trick of ours. [*Angrily.*

Belin. As I live and breathe I have not got it.

Bev. What think you now, Bellmont?

Bel. She'll find it presently, man; don't shew your humours: be upon your guard; you'll undo yourself else. Clarissa, shall you and I saunter down this walk?

Cla. My brother seems out of humour: what is the matter now?

Bel. I'll tell you presently: let us step this way.

[*Exit with* Clarissa.

Belin. Well, I declare, I don't know what is come of this odious picture.

Bev. This odious picture! how she expresses it!

Belin. You may look grave, sir, but I have it not.

Bev. I know you have not, ma'am; and though you may imagine——

Belin. Imagine! what do you mean?—Imagine what?

Bev. Don't imagine that I am to be led blindfold as you please.

Belin. Heavens! with what gravity that was said!

Bev. I am not to be deceived; I can see all round me.

Belin. You can?

Bev. I can, madam.

Belin. Well, and how do you like your prospect?

Bev. Oh! you may think to pass it off in raillery: but that picture I have this day seen in the hands of another; in the hands of the very gentleman to whom you gave it.

Belin. To whom I gave it?—have a care, sir; this is another symptom of your jealous temper.

Bev. But I tell you, madam, I saw it in his hand.

Belin. Who is the gentleman?—What's his name?

Bev. His name, madam?—'sdeath! I forgot that circumstance. Though I don't know his name, madam, I know his person, and that is sufficient.

Belin. Go on, sir: you are making yourself very ridiculous in this matter.—Ha, ha!——

Bev. You may laugh, madam, but it is no laughing matter, that let me assure you.

Belin. Oh! brave—follow your own notions. I gave it away: I have scorned your present. Ha, ha! Poor Mr. Beverley!

Bev. I don't doubt you, ma'am: I believe you did give it away.

Belin. Mighty well, sir; think so if you please. I shall leave you to your own imagination: it will find wherewithal to entertain you. Ha, ha! the self tormenting Beverley! Yonder I see Clarissa and Mr. Bellmont. I will join them this instant. Your servant, sir. Amuse yourself with your own fancies—ha, ha! [*Exit.*

Bev. [*Alone.*] Plague and distraction!—I cann't tell

what to make of this. She carries it off with an air of confidence. And yet if that be my picture, which I saw this morning, then it is plain I am only laughed at by her. The dupe of her caprice!—I cannot bear it.

Enter BELINDA, CLARISSA, *and* BELLMONT.

Belin. Observe him now. Let us walk by him without taking any notice. Let us talk of any thing rather than be silent. What a charming evening!

Cla. And how gay the Park looks!—mind the gentleman!

Belin. Take no notice; I beg you won't. Suppose we were to shew ourselves in the Mall, Clarissa, and walk our charms there, as the French express it?

Bel. Ha, ha!—Beverley:—what fixed in contemplation!

Bev. Sir, I beg—I choose to be alone, sir.

Bel. Belin. and Cla. Ha, ha, ha!

Bev. Pshaw! impertinent. [*Aside.*

Belin. Oh! for heaven's sake, let us indulge the gentleman. Let us leave him to himself, and his ill-humours. This way, this way. You shall go home and have your tea with me. Mr. Beverley, [*She kisses her hand to him at some distance, and laughs at him.*] your servant, sir: I wish you a good evening. *A l'honneur.* [*Exeunt.*

Bev. [*Alone.*] Distraction! you may retire. Your servant, madam. Racks and torment! this is too

much. If she has parted with the picture; if she has given it away—but she may only have lent it, or she may have lost it. But even that, even that is an injury to me. Why should she not be more careful of it? I will know the bottom of it. That's the house the gentleman went into. I'll wait on him directly: but they are watching me. I'll walk another way, to elude their observation. Ay, ay, you may laugh, ma'am, but I shall find out all your artifices. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

An Apartment at Sir JOHN's. *Enter Lady* RESTLESS, *meeting* ROBERT.

Lady Rest. Where are you going, sir?

Rob. To my master's room, madam, to leave these clothes there.

Lady Rest. Stay, sir; stay a moment. [*Searches the pockets.*] Where are his letters?

Rob. Letters, my lady! I know of no letters: I never touch his pockets.

Lady Rest. I guessed you would say so. You are Sir John's agent; the conductor of his schemes.

Rob. I, madam?

Lady Rest. You, sir, you are his secretary for love-affairs.

Rob. I collect his rents, my lady, and——

Lady Rest. Oh! sir, I am not to be deceived. I know you are my enemy.

Rob. Enemy, my lady; I am sure, as far as a poor servant dare, I am a friend to both.

Lady Rest. Then tell me honestly, have not you conveyed his letters out of my way?

Rob. Indeed, madam, not I.

Lady Rest. Then he has done it himself. Artful man! I never can find a line after him. Where did you go for him this morning?

Rob. This morning?

Lady Rest. Ay, this morning. I know he sent you somewhere. Where was it?

Rob. Upon my word, my lady——

Lady Rest. Very well, sir: I see how it is. You are all bent against me. I shall never be at rest till every servant in this house is of my own choosing. Is Tattle come home yet?

Rob. No, madam.

Lady Rest. Where can she be gadding? Hark!—I hear a rap at the door. This is Sir John, I suppose. Stay, let me listen. I don't know that voice. Who can it be? Some of his libertine company, I suppose.

Rob. My lady, if you will believe me——

Lady Rest. Hold your tongue, man: let me hear. You want to hinder me, do you?

Rob. Indeed, madam——

Lady Rest. Hold your tongue, I say; won't you hold your tongue? Go about your business, sir, go about your business. What does he say? [*Listening.*] I cann't hear a word. Who is below there?

Enter TATTLE, *with a Capuchin on.*

Lady Rest. So, Mrs. Tattle, who is that at the door?

Tat. A gentleman, madam, speaking to William.

Lady Rest. And where have you been, mistress? How dare you go out without my leave?

Tat. Dear my lady, don't be angry with me. I was so terrified about what happened in the morning; and your ladyship was in such a perilous taking about it, that I went to desire Mrs. Marmalet would justify herself and me.

Lady Rest. Oh! very well, Mrs. Busy-Body. You have been there, have you? You have been to frame a story among yourselves, have you, and to hinder me from discovering? But I'll go to my Lady Conquest myself. I have had no answer to my letter, and 'tis you have occasioned it. Thanks to your meddling!

Tat. Dear my lady, if you will but give me leave: I have been doing you the greatest piece of service. I believe, in my conscience, there is something in what you suspect about Sir John.

Lady Rest. Do you? why? how?

Tat. I have seen Mrs. Marmalet, and I have made such a discovery!

Lady Rest. Have you, Tattle? Well! What? speak, tell me; what is it?

Rob. Robert has been there, madam, with a message from Sir John, who wants to see her in the evening; and he has desired——

Lady Rest. Blessings on you, Tattle: well; go on; tell me all.

Enter a Servant.

Lady Rest. What do you want, sir? Who called you? Go about your business.

Serv. Madam, there is a gentleman wants to speak with Sir John about a picture.

Lady Rest. I had forgot me. It was he rapped at the door, I suppose.

Serv. Yes, madam!

Lady Rest. About a picture!—This may lead to some further discovery. Desire the gentleman to step up stairs. [*Exit Servant.*]—and so, Tattle, Robert has been there?

Tat. Yes, ma'am.

Lady Rest. And Sir John wants to speak with Marmalet in the evening, and has desired—Oh! the base man!—what has he desired? Now he is discovered. What has he desired?

Tat. He has desired, ma'am,—the poor girl does not know what to make of it—She is very sober and discreet, I assure you, ma'am—he has desired, ma'am, in the dusk of the evening, that Mrs. Marmalet will come and——

Lady Rest. How unlucky this is? The gentleman is coming. I have a mind not to see him: and yet I will too. Tattle, do you step to my room; as soon as he goes, I will come to you, and hear all in pri-

vate. [*Exit* Tattle.] In the dusk of the evening he desires to see her: abandoned wretch!

Enter BEVERLEY.

Bev. Madam——— [*Bows.*

Lady Rest. Pray walk in, sir. [*Curtsies.*

Bev. I wanted a word with Sir John Restless, madam.

Lady Rest. About a picture?

Bev. Yes, madam, a picture I had given to a lady; and however insignificant in itself, it is to me of the highest consequence, as it may conduce to the explanation of an affair, in which the happiness of my life is concerned.

Lady Rest. The lady is young?

Bev. She is.

Lady Rest. And handsome?

Bev. In the highest degree; my heart is devoted to her; and I have reason to suspect that a present from me is not of so much value as I could wish. To be plain, ma'am, I imagine she has given the picture away.

Lady Rest. As I guessed: my suspicions are just.

Bev. Your suspicions, madam! Did you suspect it was given to Sir John Restless?

Lady Rest. What I know of the matter shall be no secret to you. Pray, sir, have you spoke to the lady on this subject?

Bev. I have, but she knows nothing of the matter;

she has lost it, she has mislaid it, she can give no account of it.

Lady Rest. She has given it to Sir John, sir, to shew him how little she regards it.

Bev. Given it to him?

Lady Rest. Given it to him, sir.

Bev. Then I have no further doubt.

Lady Rest. Of what?

Bev. Madam, I would not hurt your peace of mind; I would not give you an impression of Sir John, that may affect his character.

Lady Rest. Oh! sir, stand upon no ceremony with him; an injurious, false, licentious man!

Bev. Is that his character?

Lady Rest. Notoriously: he has made me miserable; false to his marriage vows, and warm in the pursuit of his pleasures abroad!—I have not deserved it of him. Oh! Sir John! Sir John! [*Cries.*

Bev. She weeps; the case is plain, and I am undone.

Lady Rest. Pray, sir, what is the lady's name?

Bev. Belinda Blandford.

Lady Rest. Belinda Blandford! So far I have discovered. [*Aside.*

Bev. Pray, madam, have you ever seen her?

Lady Rest. Seen her, sir! yes, I have seen too much of her.

Bev. You alarm me, madam. You have seen nothing improper, I hope.

Lady Rest. I don't know what you call improper.

But, pray, what ought one to think of a young lady thrown familiarly into a gentleman's arms?

Bev. In his arms, madam! Sir John's arms!

Lady Rest. In Sir John's! in open day; in the Park; under my very window; most familiarly, wantonly reclining in his very arms.

Bev. Oh, Heavens!

Lady Rest. He clasping her with equal freedom round the waist!

Bev. False, false Belinda!

Lady Rest. Both interchanging fond, mutual glances.

Bev. Oh! madam, the whole is come to light, and I thank you for the discovery, though I am ruined by it. But give me leave: is all this certain?

Lady Rest. There can be no doubt, sir; these eyes beheld their amorous meeting.

Bev. Saw it yourself?

Lady Rest. Yes, all, all, sir. Sir John, I know, is capable of any thing, and you know what to think of Belinda, as you call her.

Bev. I now know what to think: I have long had reason to suspect.

Lady Rest. You have, sir? Then the whole affair is plain enough.

Bev. It is so. I meant an honourable connection with her;——but——

Lady Rest. But you see, sir!

Bev. Yes, I see, madam——you are sure Sir John has the picture?

Lady Rest. Sure, sir!—it is your own picture. I

had it in my hands but a moment, and he flew with ardour, with impetuosity, like a fury flew to it, and recovered it from me. What could be the meaning of all that violence?

Bev. The meaning is too plain.

Lady Rest. And then, sir, when charged and pressed home with his guilt, most hypocritically he pretended to believe it the portrait of some favourite of mine. But you know, sir, how false that insinuation is.

Bev. Oh! madam, I can justify you—Ha, ha! that is but a poor evasion, and confirms me the more in my opinion. I return you many thanks, madam, and humbly take my leave.

Lady Rest. Sir, I am glad you thought it prudent to speak to me about this affair. If any other circumstances come to your knowledge, I shall take it as a favour if you will acquaint me with them; for, indeed, sir, I am very unhappy.

Bev. I am in gratitude bound to you, and my best services you shall ever command. Madam, your most obedient.——Oh! Belinda! Belinda! [*Exit.*

Lady Rest. Now, Sir John, how will you be able to confront these stubborn facts? You are now seen through all your disguises; detected in your true colours. Tattle within here has fresh proofs against you, and your man Robert, and the whole house. I must hear Tattle's story this very moment. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

The Park. Enter Sir JOHN.

Sir John. Yes, yes, he told me his name honestly enough. Beverley is his name; and my Lady Restless, now your gallant, your paramour is known. What do I see? By all my wrongs, the very man again! coming out of my house before my face!

BEVERLEY *and* ROBERT *come out of the House.*

Bev. There, friend, there is something for your trouble.

Rob. I thank your honour.

Sir John. He bribes my servant too; and the fellow takes it! Both in their trade; both in their trade!

Bev. Could I have suspected her of such treachery? As I could wish: I take that to be Sir John Restless.

Sir John. This is he to whom I have so many obligations. [*Aside.*

Bev. Well encountered: your servant, sir.

Sir John. My servant, sir!——I rather take it you are my lady's servant.

Bev. You, if I don't mistake, Sir John, are a pretty general servant of the ladies. Pray, sir, have not you a picture of mine in your pocket?

Sir John. That, I suppose, you have heard from my good lady within there.

Bev. Yes, sir, and I have heard a great deal more from my lady.

Sir John. I don't in the least doubt it.

Bev. Sir, I do not mean to work myself up into any choler about such a trifling bauble. Since the lady has thought proper to give it to you——

Sir John. Do her justice, pray; she did not give it; so far she was true to you. I took it from her, sir.

Bev. Took it from her! That shews he is upon easy terms. [*Aside.*] It is of no consequence to me; I despise it, and you are welcome to make what use you will of it. This I will only say, that you have made me miserable.

Sir John. What, I have interrupted your happiness?

Bev. You have.

Sir John. And no doubt you think it cruel of me so to do.

Bev. Call it by what name you will: you have ruined me with the woman I doted on to distraction.

Sir John. A candid declaration! And so, sir, you doted on her, and never reflected that you were doing me the least injury?

Bev. Injury!——I promise you, sir, I will never injure you again, and so you may set your mind at peace. I here declare I never will hold farther intercourse with her.

Sir John. Oh! that is too late for me. I have now done with her myself. You are very welcome to the lady, sir! you may take her home with you as soon

as you please. I forswear her, and so I shall tell my lady this moment. [*Going.*

Bev. That will make her ladyship happy, no doubt.

Sir John. Yes, I dare say you know it will.

Bev. She told me as much, sir.

Sir John. She did!—why then you may depend I shall keep my word, and my lady may depend upon it too. And that, I suppose, will make you both happy, sir.

Bev. My happiness is past recalling: I disdain all further connection with the lady.

Sir John. Ay, you are tired of her?

Bev. I loath her, detest her, hate her as much as I ever loved her.

Sir John. And so do I too, I assure you. And so I shall tell my lady this very instant. Your servant, sir. If I can find proof sufficient, you shall hear of me, I promise you. [*Exit.*

Bev. I see how it is: she has been connected with him, till she has pall'd his very appetite. 'Sdeath, I'll seek her this moment, upbraid her with her falsehood, and then—by heavens! I shall do it with regret. I feel a tug at my heart-string: but were I to be torn piece-meal, this shall be our last interview.

Enter BELINDA, CLARISSA, *and* BELLMONT.

Belin. Alas-a-day! poor soul! see where he takes his melancholy walk. Did not I tell you, Clarissa, that the stricken deer could not quit this place?

Cla. And did not I tell you, Belinda, that you could not keep away from the pursuit?

Bel. Pray, ma'am, do you want to be in at the death, or do you mean to bring the poor thing to life again?

Belin. I!—what do you mean?—You bring me this way.

Cla. Well! if that is the case, we had as good go home, for I want my tea.

Belin. Po! not yet: it is not six o'clock.

Bel. and Cla. Ha, ha!

Belin. What do ye laugh at?

Cla. At you, my dear: why, 'tis past seven. Oh! Belinda, you are the stricken deer, I find.

Belin. Who I? Not I, truly; I——

Cla. My dear Belinda, I know you. Come, we will do the good-natured thing by you, and leave you to yourselves. Success attend you. Come, Mr. Bellmont. [*Exeunt.*

Belin. Thyrsis, a youth of the inspired train,
Fair Sacharissa lov'd, but lov'd in vain.

Bev. Po! po! [*Looking peevishly at her.*

Belin. Won't you know me, sir?

Bev. Yes, madam, I know you: it is but too true that I know you.

Belin. Still gloomy and discontented! Come, come, under pain of my displeasure, brighten up this moment.

Bev. Silly, idle, ridiculous!

Belin. Take care of what you are about. When I

proclaim a pardon, you had better embrace it, than reduce yourself to the necessity of sighing, vowing, protesting, writing to me, following me up and down, kneeling at my feet, imploring forgiveness——

Bev. Madam, you will never again see me humbled to that low degree.

Belin. Upon my word! ha, ha, ha!

Bev. Oh! you may laugh, ma'am: you have too long imposed upon my fond, easy credulity. But the witchery of your charms is over.

Belin. Very well, sir! and you are your own man again.

Bev. I am, madam; and you may be your own woman again, or any body's woman, or every body's.

Belin. You grow rude, sir!

Bev. It is time to wave all ceremony, and to tell you plainly, that your falsehood——

Belin. My falsehood, sir!

Bev. Your falsehood!—I know the whole story. I loved you once, Belinda, tenderly loved you, and by Heaven I swear, it is with sorrow that I can no longer adore you. It is with anguish that I now bid you an everlasting farewell. [*Going.*

Belin. Explain, sir: what action of my life?

Bev. Your prudence forsook you at last. It was too glaring; too manifest in open day.

Belin. Too manifest in open day!—Mr. Beverley I shall hate you.

Bev. All circumstances inform against you: my picture given away!

Belin. Insolent, provoking, wrong-headed man!—I'll confirm him in his error, to torment him as he deserves. [*Aside.*] Well, sir, what if I chose to give it away? I am mistress of my own actions, am I not?

Bev. I know that, ma'am: I know that; and I am not uneasy, ma'am.

Belin. So it seems—ha, ha!—why do you sigh, poor man?

Bev. Sigh, madam? I disdain it.

Belin. I am glad of it; now that is so manly! but pray watch yourself well, hold a guard upon all your passions, otherwise they will make a fool of you again.

Bev. And do you take care you don't expose yourself again. Lolling familiarly in a gentleman's arms.

Belin. How?

Bev. Here, in the Park; in open day.

Belin. What can this mean?

Bev. He inviting you to his house!

Belin. Oh! I understand him now; when I fainted, all this was. I'll encourage his notion, to be revenged of his waspish temper. [*Aside.*] Well, sir, and what then?

Bev. What then?

Belin. Ha, ha! poor Mr. Beverley!—why should you be in a piteous taking, because I, in the gaiety of my heart, give away a picture I set no value on, or walk with a gentleman I do set a value on, or lean on

his arm, or make the man happy by letting him draw on my glove.

Bev. Or draw off your glove, madam.

Belin. Ay, or draw it off.

Bev. Yes, or—or—or take any other liberties.

Belin. Very true.

Bev. You may make light of it, madam, but——

Belin. Why yes, a generous temper always makes light of the favours it confers.

Bev. And some generous tempers will make light of any thing to gratify their inclinations. Madam, I have done: I abjure you, eternally abjure you. [*Going.*

Belin. Bon voyage?

Bev. Don't imagine that you will see me again.

Belin. Adieu.——Well, what, coming again? Why do you linger so? [*Repeats affectedly.*

Thus o'er the dying lamp, th' unsteady flame
Hangs quivering to a point!

Bev. With what an air she carries it! I have but this one thing more to tell you: by heaven I loved you, to excess I loved you: such is my weakness, I shall never quite forget you. I shall be glad, if hereafter I hear of your happiness, and if I can, no dishonour shall befall you.

Belin. Ho, ho!—Well, my obliging, generous Don Quixote, go and fight windmills, and castles in the air, and a thousand phantoms of your own creation, for your Dulcinea's sake! ho, ho, ho!

Bev. Confusion! Take notice, madam, that this is the last time of my troubling you.

Belin. I shall expect you to-morrow morning.

Bev. No, never; by heaven, never!

Belin. Exactly at ten; your usual hour.

Bev. May I perish at your feet, if ever again——

Belin. Oh, brave; but remember ten; kneeling, beseeching, imploring, your hand upon your heart,—'Belinda, won't you forgive me?'

Bev. Damnation!——I have done: I here bid you an eternal adieu!—farewell for ever! [*Exit.*

Belin. I shall wait breakfast for you. Ha, ha! poor Beverley! he cannot command his temper. But, in spite of all his faults, I love him still. What the poet says of great wits, may be applied to all jealous lovers:

——*To madness sure they're near allied;*
And thin partitions do their bounds divide. [Exit.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

An Apartment in BEVERLEY'*s House. Enter* BEVERLEY.

Beverley.

So, Belinda, I have escaped your snares: I have recovered my freedom. And yet, if she had not proved false, what a treasure of love and happiness had I in store! her beauty—po!—no more of her beauty: it is external, superficial, the mere result of features and complexion. A deceitful Syren, to draw the unwary

into a dream of happiness, and then wake him into wonder at the storms and tempests that gather round him. I have done with her; I'll think no more of her. Oh, Belinda, Belinda!

Enter BRUSH.

Brush. Please your honour——

Bev. She that in every part of life seemed so amiable.

Brush. Sir—

Bev. Under so fair a mask to wear such loose designs!

Brush. What is he musing upon?—Sir——

Bev. I have done with her for ever; ay, for ever. [*Hums a tune.*]—I swear for ever—[*Sings.*]——Are you there, Brush?

Brush. Yes, your honour: here is a letter.

Bev. So unforeseen, so unexpected a discovery!—Well, well, well! What did you say, Brush?

Brush. A letter for your honour, sir.

Bev. Give it to me another time. [*Walks about.*] I'll not make myself uneasy about her.

Brush. I fancy your honour will be glad to have it now.

Bev. What did you say?

Brush. It is a letter from Madam Belinda, sir.

Bev. Belinda! I won't read it: take it away.

Brush. Hey, which way is the wind now? Some quarrel, I suppose: but the falling out of lovers.—Must I take it away, sir?

Bev. I have done with her for ever.

Brush. Have done with Madam Belinda, sir?

Bev. Oh, Brush, she is—but I will not proclaim her shame. No, let me still be tender of her. I will see her no more, Brush, that is all; hear from her no more: she shall not wind herself about my heart again. I'll go out of town directly: order my chaise to the door.

Brush. Had not you better defer it till 'morrow morning, sir? perhaps then——

Bev. No, no; directly; do as I bid you.

Brush. Consider, sir, if your mind should change, the trouble of coming back post-haste——

Bev. No, never; I say, never: what to her, who could smile on me, on him, on a thousand? No; she shall know that I am a man, and no longer the dupe of her artifice.

Brush. But, sir, you know that one solitary tear, which, after miserably chafing for it half an hour together, she will painfully distil from the corner of her eye, will extinguish all this rage, and then——

Bev. Po, po! you know nothing of the matter. Go and order the chaise directly.

Brush. Yes, sir. I suppose a couple of shirts will be sufficient, sir?—you will hardly stay them out.

Bev. Pack up all, sir. I shall stay in the country a whole month, if it be necessary.

Brush. An entire month, sir?

Bev. I am resolved, fixed, and determined; and so do as I have ordered you.—[*Exit* Brush.]—So shall I

disentangle myself from her entirely, so shall I forget the fondness my foolish heart had conceived for her. I hate her, loath her, pity her, am sorry for her, and love her still. I must expel this weakness: I will think no more of her: and yet—Brush, Brush!—I may as well see her letter too: only to try what her cunning can suggest.

Enter BRUSH.

Bev. You may as well leave the letter, Brush.

Brush. Yes, sir; I thought as much. [*Exit.*

Bev. [*Alone.*] Now what varnish will she put upon the matter?—[*Reads.*]—'The false gaiety of my heart, through which my dear Beverley might have read my real anguish, at our last meeting, has now subsided. If you will come to me, I will not laugh at your inquietude of temper, but will clear all your doubts, and shew you how much I am, my dearest Beverley, unalterably yours,

BELINDA BLANDFORD.'

Pshaw! po! satisfy my doubts; I have no doubts; I am convinced. These arts prevail no more. Ha, ha! [*Laughs peevishly.*]——'My dear Beverley'—[*Reads, and tears the letter by degrees.*]——'real anguish'—ha, ha!——[*Tears another piece.*]——'inquietude of temper'——[*Another piece.*]—'clear all your doubts'——Po, po, po!——ha, ha, ha!——damnation!——I'll think no more of her——[*Tears another bit*]——ha, ha!——'dearest Beverley'——ha, ha!——artful woman!——'unalterably yours'—false, false, false!

——[*Tears another piece.*]——I'll not make myself uneasy about her. Perfidy, treachery, and ingratitude! [*Fixes his eye, looks uneasy, and tears the letter in a violent passion.*]

Enter CLARISSA *and* BELLMONT.

Cla. So, brother.

Bel. Beverley!

Bev. Sister, your servant: Mr. Bellmont, yours.

Cla. You seem melancholy, brother.

Bev. No, not I. I am in very good spirits.

Cla. Ha, ha! my dear brother, that is seen through: you are now upon the rack.

Bev. What, about a woman, a false, ungrateful woman!

Bel. Whom you still admire.

Cla. To whom you'll be upon your knees in five minutes.

Bev. You are mistaken: I am going out of town.

Bel. But you will take your leave.

Bev. I have done that, once for all.

Cla. Has not she writ to you?

Bev. She has; and there—there you see the effect of her letter. You will see that I shall maintain a proper firmness on the occasion.

Bel. My dear Beverley, have done with this mockery: you but deceive yourself.

Bev. You want to deceive me, sir: but it is in vain. What, plead for treachery, for falsehood, for deceit?

Cla. No, sir, but for my friend, my lovely friend, for Belinda, for truth, for innocence.

Bev. You don't know all the circumstances.

Cla. But we do know all the circumstances, and, my dear brother, you have behaved very ill.

Bev. Heaven knows, I have not; and yet, Heaven knows, I should be glad to be convinced I have.

Cla. I will be your friend, and give you a hint. We women are soft and compassionate in our nature; go to her without delay, fall at her feet, beg her pardon, drop a tear or two, and all will be well again.

Bev. Do you come to make sport of me? May contempt and beggary attend me; may all the calamities of life befall me; may shame, confusion, and disquiet of heart for ever sting me, if I hold further intercourse with her; if I do not put her from my thoughts for ever. Did you leave her at home?

Cla. We did.

Bev. Well, let her stay there: it is of no consequence to me. How did she bear what passed between us?

Cla. Like a sweet girl as she is: she behaved like an angel: I shall love her better than ever for her good humour.

Bev. Oh! I don't doubt her good humour. She has smiles at command. Let her smile, or not smile, 'tis all alike to me. Did she say any thing?

Cla. She told us the whole story, and told it in tears too.

Bev. Ay! them she can command too! But I have no curiosity about her. Was she in tears?

Cla. She was, and wept bitterly. How could you, brother, behave so rashly to so amiable a girl? Have you a pleasure in being the cause of her uneasiness?

Bev. I the cause?—you wrong me, by Heaven you wrong me: my Lady Restless was the cause. She told me such things; she planted daggers in my very heart.

Cla. You planted daggers in Belinda's heart. And it was barbarous. What, because a lady has not strength enough to bear up against a father, who is resolved to give her away to another, and because she faints out of excessive tenderness for you, and in that distress meets accidental relief from Sir John Restless at his own door?

Bev. How!

Cla. And because my Lady Restless sees this out of her window, and has a perverse talent of misinterpreting appearances into realities, to her own disadvantage; you must therefore fill your head with ungenerous suspicions? Oh! for shame, brother, how could you?

Bev. But, is all this true?—is it really the case?

Bel. How can you doubt it? You know Belinda too well: it is the case, man.

Bev. I should be glad to find it so.

Cla. Well! I tell you it is so. How could you think otherwise? you know she has the best heart in

the world, and is so nice of honour, that she scorns all falsehood and dissimulation.

Bel. Ha, ha! my dear Beverley, you have done the absurdest thing.

Bev. Why, if what you say can be made to appear ——but then she'll never forgive my past behaviour.

Cla. Pol you talk as if you were wholly unletter'd in the tempers of women. My dear brother, you know, you men can do what you please with us, when you have once gained an interest in our hearts. Go to her, I say, go to her, and make your peace.

Bev. May I depend upon what you say?

Cla. You may.

Bev. Then I'll fly to her this instant, humble myself to her, and promise by all my future life to atone for this brutal injury.

Enter BRUSH.

Brush. The chaise is at the door, sir.

Bev. You may put up again; I shan't go out of town.

Brush. No, sir!

Bev. No—ha, ha!——you may put up, and let me have the chariot directly.

Brush. Yes, sir; I knew it would come to this.

[*Exit.*

Bev. But do you think she will forgive me?

Cla. She will; love will plead your cause.

Bev. My dear sister, I am for ever obliged to you; and, Bellmont, I thank you too. How could I wrong

her so? I shall behold her once again. I cannot help laughing at my own rashness. Is the chariot ready?—I won't stay for it; I am on the wing, my dear Belinda, to implore forgiveness. And so she fainted away in the Park, and my Lady Restless saw Sir John afford her relief?—Ha, ha, ha!—whimsical enough. Ha, ha, ha! what a strange construction her crazy temper put upon it? Ha, ha! how could the woman be so foolish? My dear Belinda, I will fly to you this moment—ha, ha! [*Going, returns.*] Sir John shall give me back the picture, and, on my knees, I will once more present it to her.

Cla. So, so! you are come to yourself, I find.

Bel. I knew it would be so.

Bev. She shall have the picture. I'll find Sir John directly: and then—ha, ha! how could I be such a madman! ha, ha!—sister, your servant. Bellmont, yours. Ha, ha! what a piece of work has that foolish Lady Restless made for us all? [*Exit singing.*

Cla. Let us follow him: I must be present at their reconciliation. [*Exit with* Bellmont.

SCENE II.

An Apartment at BELINDA's. *Enter* BELINDA.

Belin. This rash, unaccountable man! how could he entertain such a suspicion! ungrateful Beverley! he

almost deserves I should never see him again.—Tippet! I sha'n't be easy till I hear from him. Tippet!

Enter TIPPET.

Belin. Is the servant returned from Mr. Beverley's?

Tip. Not yet, madam.

Belin. I wonder what keeps him. I am upon thorns till I see the dear, ungenerous man, and explain every thing to him. Oh, Mr. Beverley! how could you treat me so? But I was partly to blame; my Lady Restless inflamed his mind, and I should not have trifled with his passion. Is the other servant returned from Sir John Restless?

Tip. He is, madam.

Belin. And what answer?

Tip. Sir John will wait upon you himself, madam, directly.

Belin. Very well! I must get him to set every thing in its true light, and justify my conduct to Mr. Beverley. And yet the uncertainty of Beverley's temper alarms me strangely. His eternal suspicions! but there is nothing in that: my future conduct, my regard for him will cure that disease, and then——

Tip. I dare be sworn it will, ma'am.

Belin. Yes, I think it will: when he knows me better, he will learn to think generously of me. On my part, I think I can be sure he will meet with nothing but open, unsuspecting love.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir John Restless, madam.

Belin. Shew him in. Tippet, do you leave the room.

Enter Sir JOHN.

Sir John. In compliance with your commands, madam——

Belin. I am obliged to you, sir, for the trouble you have been pleased to give yourself. A particular circumstance has happened in your family, to my utter disquiet.

Sir John. Madam, there have happened things in my family, to my utter disquiet too.

Belin. I am sorry for that, sir. I have been made quite unhappy, and must beg, as it is in your power, that you will be kind enough to remove the cause of my uneasiness.

Sir John. Whatever I can do, you may command.

Belin. Sir, I thank you, and must tell you, that your lady has done me the most irreparable injury.

Sir John. She has done the same to me. My injuries are irreparable too. But how has she injured you, madam?

Belin. She has ruined me, sir, with the man I love to distraction.

Sir John. Now, here something else will come to light. [*Aside.*]—How, how has she done that, madam?

Belin. She has entirely drawn off his affections from me.

Sir John. And fixed them upon herself, I suppose.

Belin. I don't say that, sir.

Sir John. But I dare say it; and I believe it.

Belin. Pardon me, sir, I don't charge the lady with any thing of that kind. But she has unaccountably taken it into her head to be jealous of me.

Sir John. Jealous of you!

Belin. Her ladyship saw the little offices of civility I received from you this morning; she misunderstood every thing, it seems, and has told the gentleman with whom I was engaged in a treaty of marriage, that improper freedoms have passed between us.

Sir John. Artifice! artifice! her usual policy, madam, to cover her own libertine ways.

Belin. I don't mean to say any thing harsh of the lady. But you know what foundation there is for this, and I hope will do me justice.

Sir John. Oh! madam, to the world, to the wide world I'll justify you. I will wait upon the gentleman. Who is he, madam? what's his name?

Belin. Beverley, sir.

Sir John. Beverley!

Belin. Yes, sir; you seem surprised. Do you know him, sir?

Sir John. Yes, yes, I know him; and he shall know me: my resentment he shall feel; he shall be answerable to me.

Belin. Answerable to you!

Sir John. To me, madam. I told you at first this was her scheme to shelter herself; and he, I suppose, is combined with her to give this turn to the affair, and to charge me with infidelity. But you, ma'am, can witness for me.

Belin. I can, sir: but can Mr. Beverley be capable of a dishonourable action?

Sir John. That point is clear enough. He has injured me in the highest degree, destroyed my happiness.

Belin. How, sir! are you sure of this?

Sir John. He has given her his picture; I caught her with her eyes rivetted to it; I heard her admiration, her praises of it; her wishes that she had been married to such a man. I saw her print a thousand kisses on it; and in the very fact I wrested it out of her hand.

Belin. If I imagined him capable of what you say, I should scarcely be willing to join myself to him for life. Quarrel with me about his picture, and at the same time give it to another!

Sir John. Lady Restless had the picture. Without doubt, you must be very happy with a man of his gallantry.

Belin. Happy, sir! I should be miserable; distracted; I should break my heart. But do you think you have sufficient proof?

Sir John. I have seen him coming out of my house since, clandestinely, shunning every observant eye,

with the characters of guilt in his face; and all the discourse I had with him, served only to convince me the more.

Belin. Abandoned wretch! was this the love he professed for me? Sir, I have only to hope you will vindicate me in this matter. I commend myself to your honour, and I thank you for this favour.

Sir John. Our evidences will mutually speak for each other, and confound their dark designs. Madam, I take my leave.

Belin. Sir, your most obedient.

Sir John. The gentleman shall feel my indignation.

Belin. You cannot treat him too severely.

Sir John. I will expose him, I promise you. Madam, your humble servant. [*Exit.*

Belin. Oh! Mr. Beverley, could I have imagined this? False! false man! and yet how shall I forget him: but I will make an effort, tho' it pierce me to the quick. I will tear him from my heart. This moment I will write to him, and forbid him to see me more. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

The Park. Enter Sir JOHN.

Sir John. If I can procure sufficient evidence, I shall bring the matter to a divorce, and make an example of them all. Would Marmalet were come: this is her time to a moment. If I can worm the secret

out of her—Is not that she, yonder?—Not quite day-light enough to distinguish, but I think I perceive a person masked. Hist! hist!—Mrs. Marmalet—she comes this way: it is she. Mrs. Marmalet, your servant.

Enter a Person Masked.

You are very good, Mrs. Marmalet——

Mask. Bless my heart, I am scared out of my senses.

Sir John. What's the matter, pray? what's the matter?

Mask. Oh, sir! I tremble like a leaf. I was accosted in a rude manner by some gentlemen yonder; I can't stay here, let us go into your house, sir; I beg you will.

Sir John. My house? Would not any other house do as well?

Mask. Oh! no, sir; not for the world.

Sir John. Why my wife is not at home, and so I think I may venture: not but I had rather it were elsewhere.

Mask. Indeed, Sir John, I am frightened out of my senses. You will do me a favour if you will take me into the house.

Sir John. Say no more: it shall be so. Robert—

Rob. Is that Sir John? [*Opening the door.*

Sir John. Your lady is not at home, Robert, is she?

Rob. No, sir.

Sir John. Then do you go in, and take care that

nobody sees Mrs. Marmalet with me. Come, I'll shew you the way. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

Sir JOHN'S *House.* *Enter* TATTLE, *and* BEVERLEY.

Tat. [*As she enters.*] Ay, poor lady! she is unfortunate, indeed; and, poor gentleman, he is as jealous as my lady to the full. There has been a deal to do about that picture you mention, sir.

Bev. That will be explained presently: I'll wait till he comes home. I can't possibly go without speaking to him.

Tat. Indeed, you had better not stay, sir. You don't consider the mischief your being in the house may occasion.

Bev. Mischief! how do you mean?

Tat. Lord, sir! I would not have you stay for the world: I would not indeed. You can call again in an hour, sir, and you'll certainly find him at home then. Bless my heart, sir!—I fancy that's his voice. Do, dear sir! you'll be the ruin of my lady, if he sees you here, sir, waiting in his house: he'll be persuaded you come after my lady; the world will never beat it out of his head.

Bev. But I shall give him to understand——

Tat. He won't understand any thing. Oh lud! oh lud! he's coming up: I'll run and look. [*Exit.*

Bev. What a flurry the woman is in! a foolish jade! I must speak with him now.

Tat. [*Entering.*] It is he as I am alive, sir; and there is a woman in a mask with him.

Bev. A woman in a mask! Zoons, if that should be Belinda! my mind misgives me strangely!

[*Aside.*

Tat. Do, dear sir; you look like a good-natured gentleman; let me hide you out of the way, sir. You would not be the destruction of a poor servant.

Bev. A mask coming home with him! I must know who that is. I won't leave the house without knowing. If I could conceal myself—have you any private place, Mrs. Tattle?

Tat. That is the very thing I mean, sir. Let me conceal you in that closet till he passes through this room. He never stays long here. It won't take you two minutes. Do, sweet sir, I'll down on my knees to you.

Bev. I must know who it is. Come, dispose of me as you will. If this should be Belinda! [*Exit.*

Tat. Heavens bless you, sir, for this goodness! I'll lock the door to make sure work of it. I was never so frightened in my life. [*Exit.*

Enter Sir JOHN, *and a Person Masked.*

Sir John. Mrs. Marmalet, I am obliged to you for this favour. I wanted a word or two with you.

Mask. So Robert informed me, sir.

Sir John. Did he tell you my business?

Mask. No, sir.

Sir John. Look ye then: if you will gratify me in

what I shall ask, you may command any thing. Now you may be uncovered.

Mask. La! sir—I hear a noise: I am afraid somebody's coming: I shall be seen.

Sir John. Hush! no: there's nobody. If you will indulge me on this occasion, I am yours for ever. Here, here is a purse of money for you.

Mask. But if this should come to the knowledge of your lady, I am ruined and undone.

Sir John. No, no, I'll take care of you.

Mask. Will you, sir?

Sir John. I will. But come; let me remove this from your face.

Mask. But somebody may come.

Sir John. I'll lock the door. There, now we are safe.

Mask. But in a little time you'll make up all quarrels with your lady, and I shall be ruined.

Sir John. No, no, never fear: I shall never be reconciled to her: I hate her; I detest her.

Lady Rest. Do you so, sir? [*Unmasking.*] Now, Sir John, what can you say now, sir?

Sir John. My Lady Restless! Confusion! what shall I say?

Lady Rest. Oh, Sir John! Sir John! what evasion have you now, sir? Can you deny your guilt any longer?

Sir John. This is unlucky. That villain Robert has betrayed me. I can't explain myself to her now. Try what soothing will do.—My Lady Restless, if you

will but have patience, this matter shall be explained.

Lady Rest. Explained, sir!

Sir John. Yes, my dear, explained, and——

Lady Rest. My dear, too! the assurance of you!

Sir John. I say, my dear, for I still regard you; and this was all done to—to—cure you of your jealousy: all done to cure you of your jealousy.

Lady Rest. A fine way you have taken!

Sir John. Yes, yes: and so you will see presently: all to convince you how groundless your suspicions are; and then we shall live very happy together.

Lady Rest. Ay!

Sir John. I have no further suspicions of you. I see my error, and I want you to see your's. Ha, ha!—I have no suspicions that will put her off her guard. [*Aside.*] My dear, compose your spirits, and—

Lady Rest. And do you think to deny every thing even in the face of conviction? Base, base man! I'll go this moment and write to my brother.

Sir John. Now you talk wildly. This is all raving: you make yourself very ridiculous. You do, indeed. I had settled all this on purpose, and contrived that it should come to your ears, and then I knew you would do just as you have done; and——then——I—I resolved to do just as I have done; only to hint to you, that listeners seldom hear any good of themselves, and to shew you how wrong it is to be too suspicious, my dear: was it not well done?—ha, ha, ha!

Lady Rest. And do you laugh at me too, sir? Make

me your sport? I'll go and get pen and ink this moment.

Sir John. Oh! do so, ma'am; do so—ha, ha! you'll only expose yourself: go and write, madam—ha, ha, ha!—

Lady Rest. I will, sir. [*Going.*] The door is locked. This won't succeed, sir. I suppose you have the key. Ay, I'll lay my life you have, and some one or other of your creatures is locked in there.

Sir John. There again. This is of a piece with all your vain surmises. Ha, ha! you are mighty silly, indeed you are.

Lady Rest. I will search that closet. I am determined I will.

Sir John. Do so, ma'am, do so. Ha, ha! I cann't but laugh at her.

Lady Rest. I'll have the door broke open, if you won't give me the key.

Sir John. Ha, ha, ha!—How you expose yourself.

Lady Rest. Will you give me the key, sir?

Sir John. Ha, ha, ha! it is too ridiculous!

Lady Rest. Mighty well, sir. Tattle!—who waits there? I will find out all your artifices. Tattle, I say.

Sir John. Tol de rol lol!—ha, ha, ha!—a silly woman.

Enter TATTLE.

Lady Rest. Do you know any thing of the key of that closet, Tattle?

Tat. The key, ma'am? I have it, ma'am.

Lady Rest. Give it to me.

Tat. That is, I have it not, ma'am. Don't have it, ma'am, don't ask for it. [*Aside to her.*

Lady Rest. Don't ask for it! but I will have it.—Give me the key this instant.

Sir John. How, is she not willing to give it? There is something in this, then. Give the key this moment, you jade, give it to me.

Lady Rest. You sha'n't have it, sir. What, you want to hinder me! give the key to me.

Tat. Dear heart, I have lost it, ma'am.—Better not have it, ma'am. [*Aside.*

Sir John. Give it to me this moment, I say.

Lady Rest. If you don't let me have it, it is as much as your place is worth.

Tat. The devil is in it! there it is then. Let me make my escape. [*Exit.*

Lady Rest. Now sir, we shall see, now, now.

Sir John. Ay, now search, if you will.

[*Laughing at her.*

Lady Rest. [*Unlocking the door.*] You shall be found out, I promise you—Oh! [*Screams out.*

Sir John. What is the matter now?

Lady Rest. Heavens, what have we here?

Sir John. Oh! there is somebody there then.

Enter BEVERLEY.

Bev. Madam—— [*Bows to her.*

Sir John. By all that's false, here he is again!

Lady Rest. What, in the name of wonder, brings you here, sir?

Sir John. Oh, madam, you know his business, and I know his business; and the gentleman knows his business. There he is, ma'am; there is the gentleman waiting for you; true to his appointment, you see.—Sir, your humble servant. My Lady Restless, your humble servant. Now write to your brother, do. I should be glad to know what you can say now. Now, now; is the case plain now?

Lady Rest. I am in amaze! I don't know what to make of this.

Bev. Sir, however odd this may appear——

Sir John. Ay, now settle it between yourselves: give it what turn you will, sir, she will confirm it. You need not be afraid, sir; you will agree in your story; she is quick of invention, and I dare say you are pretty quick too.

Bev. Sir, I must beg you will put no forced construction upon this matter.

Sir John. And you beg the same, ma'am, don't you?

Bev. Sir, I beg to be heard. My business here is to desire you will return me the picture which you have in your possession. It is now become dear to me, sir.

Sir John. I dare say it is.

Bev. And must be returned.

Sir John. It is of equal value to me. It shall rise in evidence against you both.

Lady Rest. Evidence against me? explain yourself. How did you get in here? What's your business? What brought you hither? What's your errand?

Sir John. Ay, sir, speak; how did you get in here? What's your business? What brought you hither? What's your errand?

Bev. Vexation! I am beset by them both at once.

Lady Rest. Speak, sir, explain.

Sir John. Ay, sir, explain.

Bev. Sir, if you will give me leave, I will satisfy you entirely. I assure you, sir, and you too, ma'am, that the liberty I have taken with your closet is entirely owing to your maid, Tattle.

Sir John. The jade! I don't doubt it, sir.

Bev. To prevent, if possible, the interpretation now put upon seeing me in this house.

Sir John. And it was well contrived, sir. Oh, my Lady Restless.

Lady Rest. By all that's just, I knew nothing of it.

Bev. Nothing, upon my honour, sir.

Sir John. Oh, I knew you would both agree.

Bev. As I am a gentleman, I tell you the real fact.

Sir John. You need not, sir; I know the real fact.

Bev. I have no time to lose in frivolous altercation: I must now desire the picture, directly.

Sir John. I wish you a good evening.

Bev. I shall not stir without it. I should be glad

you would comply without a quarrel. I must be obliged to——

Sir John. Ay, now her prize-fighter begins. [*Aside.*] I desire you will quit my house, sir.

Bev. I am not to be trifled with. If you don't return it by fair means, I shall be forced to draw.

Sir John. There again now! she has set him on to cut my throat: but I will disappoint her. She is a worthless woman, and I won't fight about her. There, sir, there is your trinket. I shall have proof sufficient without it.

Bev. Upon my honour, sir, you will have no proof of any transgression of mine. If you suspect your lady from these appearances, you wrong her much, I assure you.

Lady Rest. Sir, I desire you will explain all this.

Bev. Call up your maid, madam, and then——

Sir John. No, sir, no more of it. I am satisfied. I wish you good night.

Bev. When you are willing to listen to reason, I shall be ready to convince you of your error. Madam, you may depend I shall do justice to your honour upon all occasions. And now I take my leave. [*Exit.*

Sir John. Now, my Lady Restless, now! You are thoroughly known; all your artifices are known; Mr. Beverley is known; my Lord Conquest is known!

Lady Rest. My Lord Conquest, sir! I despise all your imputations. My Lord Conquest's maid, sir! what can you say to that?

Sir John. Very well, madam! 'tis now my turn

to write to your brother, and I promise you I will do it.

Lady Rest. You will write, sir, you will write!—Well, his assurance is unequalled. [*Aside.*]—You will write! That is pleasant indeed.—Write, sir; do; you will only expose your weakness.—Ha, ha! you make yourself very ridiculous; you do indeed.—Ha, ha!

Sir John. 'Sdeath, madam! am I to be insulted with a contumelious laugh into the bargain?

Lady Rest. Why, my dear, this was all done—to—to—to—cure you of your jealousy; for I knew you would act as you have done, and so I resolved to do as I have done. Was it not well done, my dear? Ha, ha!—

Sir John. Damnation! this is too much: it is beyond all patience.

Lady Rest. Ha, ha, ha! the tables are turned, I think. [*Sings and laughs.*

Sir John. Let me tell you, it is no laughing matter. You are a vile woman; I know you, and the world shall know you: I promise you it shall.

Lady Rest. I am clear in my own conviction, and your slander I despise: nor shall your artifices blind me or my friends any longer. Sir, as you say, it is no laughing matter. I promise you, you shall never dishonour me again in this house.

Sir John. And I promise you, madam, that you shall never dishonour me in any house.

Lady Rest. Injurious, false, perfidious man!

Sir John. Deceitful, wanton! wanton woman!

[*Exeunt, at opposite doors.*

ACT V. SCENE I.

An Apartment at Mr. BLANDFORD's. *Enter* BELINDA.

Belinda.

UNGENEROUS, false, deceitful Beverley! under that fair appearance could I imagine that he harboured so much treachery? Attached to Lady Restless; engaged in a dishonourable intrigue with the wife of another, and yet professing an affection for me, with ardour professing it, and for me only! He is likely to regard the honour of the marriage-bed, who is ready to commit a tresspass on the happiness of his neighbour. It was Providence sent Sir John Restless to pay me a visit. The whole is now brought to light; and, Mr. Beverley, I have done with you for ever. I shall now obey my father's commands. By giving my hand to Sir William Bellmont's son, I shall punish an undeserving libertine for his treachery.

Enter TIPPET.

Belin. Well, Tippet, have you done as I ordered you?

Tip. I have, madam.

Belin. The perfidious man! did you ever know such behaviour?

Tip. He is a traitor, like the rest of them.

Belin. After all the regard I professed for him! after so many ardent vows and protestations as he has made me!

Tip. The hours that he has sighed away at your feet!

Belin. I will banish him from my thoughts. My resolution is fixed, and so I have told my father. Is Sir William Bellmont with him?

Tip. He is, ma'am: they are both in close talk: they are over their glass, and are so overjoyed at the change of your mind.

Belin. And I applaud myself for what I have done. —Oh, Mr. Beverley! you have forced me to this extremity.—Here, take this letter, Tippet, and give it to him with your own hands.

Tip. He shall have it. [*Takes the letter.*

Belin. Where are all his letters?

Tip. Here, ma'am. [*Shews a parcel.*

Belin. The bracelets, and the pocket-book?

Tip. I have them safe.

Belin. Very well: take his presents home to him; and, do you hear? Bring me back all the foolish letters I writ to him.

Tip. Never doubt me: I won't quit the house without them. Exchange is all fair.

Belin. That letter will tell him, that though I now

break with him in a manner, that may seem abrupt, his character and conduct have compelled me to it. Be sure you confirm that to him.

Tip. He shall here it all, and roundly too.

Belin. Very well: you may go.—Tippet,—ask his man.—as if from yourself,—carelessly,—as it were by accident—whether his master has talked of me? and what he said, Tippet?

Tip. I know Mr. Brush: I can wheedle it out of him, I warrant me.

Belin. Get at the particulars: not that I care: I don't want to know any thing about the ungrateful man. It does not concern me now. My foolish weakness is over: let him care as little for me as I do for him: you may tell him so.

Tip. Your message sha'n't lose in the carrying.

Belin. Well, that's all: you may begone.

Tip. Yes, ma'am. [*Going.*

Belin. Mind what I have said.

Tip. You may trust to me. [*Going.*

Belin. Don't forget a word of it.

Tip. No, not a syllable. [*Going.*

Belin. And hark ye: tell him how easy, how composed I am. That will gall him. You see, Tippet, I am quite unconcerned. [*Forcing a smile.*

Tip. Yes, ma'am: you don't seem to fret in the least.

Belin. It is easy to perceive that I am not at all discomposed. You may see how gay I am upon the occasion. [*Affecting to laugh.*

Tip. [*Laughing.*] Oh! yes, ma'am: you make quite a laughing matter of it.

Belin. Very true: a perfect air of indifference!—Well, I have done. Tell him that upon no account will I ever exchange a word with him; that I will never hear of him; never think of him; never see him; and never, upon any consideration, admit the smallest intercourse; no, never; I will have no more to do with him.

Tip. I have my lesson, ma'am, and I am glad you are so resolved upon it. [*Going.*

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Mr. Beverley, madam.

Tip. You must not let him up stairs; my lady will never see his face.

Belin. Yes, I think I may see him: shew him up. I will see him once more, and tell him all myself. It will come better from me, Tippet.

Tip. Yes, ma'am, you will do it with a better grace; and your resolution will melt away like a bit of sugar in your mouth.

Belin. My resolution is not to be altered: you may withdraw, Tippet.

Tip. Yes, ma'am.—Ah! she has a hankering after him still. [*Exit.*

Belin. I shall now take my leave of him.—But then, my friend Clarissa! can I rob her of her lover? she has not deserved it at my hands. Though Mr. Be-

verley has deceived me, must I be false to honour, and to friendship?

Enter BEVERLEY.

Bev. Belinda! how gladly do I once again behold—

Belin. And with what resentment have not I reason to behold, sir——

Bev. You have, Belinda; you have reason I grant it: forgive the rash words my folly uttered.

Belin. Mistake me not, sir: it is not your words I quarrel with: your actions, Mr. Beverley, your actions, sir!

Bev. They are not to be extenuated: but surely, after the letter you honoured me with——

Belin. Sir, I have heard every thing since I was guilty of that folly.

Bev. Heard! what?

Belin. Dissemble if you will: but this must be the last of our conversing together. My maid will return you whatever I have received from you: all my silly letters I must desire you to deliver to her; and then visit me no more, sir.

Bev. Belinda!—you will not wound me thus. Here is the picture which caused that unlucky mistake between us. I have recovered it from Sir John Restless.

Belin. From my Lady Restless, sir.

Bev. Madam!

Belin. Oh! fie, sir; no more; I have done.

Bev. You must, you must accept it. Thus on my knees I beg you. Will you, Belinda?

[*Takes her hand.*

Belin. Leave me, sir: let go my hand, Mr. Beverley: your falsehood——

Bev. My falsehood! by all the——

Belin. Your falsehood, sir: Sir John Restless has told me all; every circumstance.

Bev. He has told you! what has he told? his life shall answer it.

Belin. You have destroyed my peace of mind for ever. Nay, you yourself have forced me into the arms of another.

Bev. What do I hear?

Belin. My Lady Restless will rejoice at the news: the event will not be unpleasing to her; but she is welcome: let her enjoy her triumph.

Bev. You astonish me, Belinda: what does all this mean?

Belin. It means, that, in obedience to the commands of a father, I have agreed to marry Mr. Bellmont.

Bev. Mr. Bellmont!—him!—marry him! it is very well, ma'am: I expected it would come to this, and my Lady Restless is only mentioned on this occasion, as a retort for my accusation about Sir John. I understand it; and, by Heaven! I believe that whole story.

Belin. You do, sir!

Bev. I do: fool that I was to humble myself to

you. My pride is now piqued, and I am glad, madam, as glad as you can be, to break off for ever.

Belin. Oh! sir, I can be as indifferent on my part. You have only to send me back my letters, and——

Bev. Agreed, agreed. I'll go home this moment, and send them all. Before I go, madam, here is your own picture, which you had given me with your own hands. Mr. Bellmont will be glad of it; or Sir John Restless will be glad of it; or any body will be glad of it; you need not be at a loss.

Belin. Very like, sir. [*Takes the picture.*] Tyrant, tyrant man! to treat me in this barbarous manner. [*Cries.*

Bev. Tears! Belinda! [*Approaching.*] Belinda!

Belin. No more of your insidious arts. I will hear no more. Oh! my heart, my heart will break. I did not think it was in your nature to behave as you have done; but—farewell for ever. [*Exit.*

Bev. Belinda! hear me but speak. By Heaven, my Lady Restless——she is gone: 'sdeath! I have been duped by her all this time; I will now summon up all that is man within me, and in my turn despise her.

Enter TIPPET.

Tip. If you are going home, sir, I will take the things with me now.

Bev. Yes, I am going: I will leave this detested—

Tip. This abominable place, sir. [*Laughing at him.*

Bev. This hell!

Tip. Ha, ha!—ay, sir, this hell.

Bev. This mansion of perfidy, ingratitude, and fraud.

Tip. Very right, sir, let us go.

Bev. And yet——Tippet, you must not stir. Indulge me but a little. It is all a misunderstanding, this.

Tip. My lady will have no more to say to you. You may take the things, sir: my lady resigns them to you, sir.

Bev. Oh! Tippet, use your interest with her. Keep them in the house till I return. I will clear up this whole matter presently. I must not lose her thus.

[*Exit.*

Tip. Poor gentleman! he seems in a lamentable way. Well, I fancy for my part he is a true lover after all; that's what I do; and my young lady, I fear, is——

Enter BELINDA.

Tip. Madam, madam, madam, you are to blame; you are, indeed.

Belin. Is he gone?

Tip. He is, ma'am.

Belin. Did he say any thing? was he uneasy? or did he carry if off with a——

Tip. Oh! madam, he went away sighing short, his heart throbbing, his eyes brimful, his looks pale: you are to blame, you are, indeed, madam. I dare be sworn he has never proved false.

Belin. Oh! Tippet, could I be sure of that!

Tip. But you are not sure of the contrary. Why won't you see my Lady Restless? See her directly, madam; go to her now before it is too late; before the old folks, who are putting their heads together, have settled the whole affair. Dear ma'am, be advised. I hear them coming. They will hurry you into a match, and you'll repent of it. How cruel this is! Here they come.——No, its madam Clarissa.

Enter CLARISSA.

Cla. So, Belinda; you have thrown things into fine confusion. You have involved yourself, and my brother, and Mr. Bellmont, and every body, in most terrible difficulties.

Belin. My dear Clarissa, here have been such doings between your brother and me.

Cla. So I find. I met him as I came hither. You have had fine doings indeed. I have heard the whole; my brother has told me every thing.

Tip. Madam, madam; I hear your father. Sir William Bellmont is with him: they are coming up stairs.

Belin. I am not in a disposition to see them now. Clarissa suspend your judgment; step with me to my own room, and I will then give you such reasons, as, you will own yourself, sufficiently justify my conduct.

Cla. The reasons must be ingenious, that can make

any kind of apology for such behaviour: I shall be glad to hear you.

Belin. Very well, follow me quickly. You will find that my resolution is not so rash as you imagine.

[*Exit with* Clarissa.

Tip. They have got into a rare puzzle; and how they will get out of it, is beyond my dexterity; and so let 'em manage as well as they can.

Enter BLANDFORD, *Sir* WILLIAM, *and Young* BELLMONT.

Bland. Sir William, we have made a good day's work of it: the writings will be ready to-morrow morning. Where is Belinda? I thought she was in this room.

Tip. She is gone into her own room, sir; she is not well.

Sir Will. She has changed her mind, perhaps: I shall have no faith in this business, till it is all concluded.

Bland. Changed her mind, say you? No, no; I can depend upon her. I'll bring her to you this moment, and you and your son shall hear a declaration of her mind out of her own lips. Tippet, where is Belinda?

Tip. I'll shew you the way, sir. [*Exit with* Blandford.

Sir Will. Now we shall see what authority you have over your daughter. I have your promise, George: if she consent, you will be ready to comply with the wishes of your father.

Bel. Sir,—you may depend, that is as far as matters are in my power: but you know, as I told you already, the lady has a settled rooted aversion to me.

Sir Will. Aversion!—she can change her mind, cann't she? Women have no settled principle. They like to-day, and dislike to-morrow. Besides, has not her father promised her to you in marriage? If the old gentleman likes you, what have you to do with her aversion?

Bel. To do with it! A great deal, I am afraid. You are not now to learn, that, when a young lady marries against her inclination, billet-doux, assignations, plots, intrigues, and a terrible *et cætera* of female stratagem, mount into her brain, and the poor husband in the mean time—

Sir Will. Come, lad, don't play the rogue with your father. Did not you promise me, if she made no objection, that there would be no obstacle on your part?

Bel. I promised to be sure, but yet cann't help thinking—

Sir Will. And I cann't help thinking, that you know how to equivocate. Look you, George, your words were plain downright English, and I expect that you will perform to the very letter. I have fixed my heart upon this match. Mr. Blandford and I have passed the day at the Crown and Rolls to read over the deeds. I have been dining upon parchment, as I may say. I now tell you, once for all, you must be observant of my will and pleasure.

Bel. To end all dispute, sir, if the lady—[*Aside.*] She will never consent; I may safely promise.—If the lady, sir, can at once forget her engagements with my friend Beverley——

Sir Will. You will then forget Clarissa: safely spoken. Come, I am satisfied. And now, now we shall see.

Enter BLANDFORD.

Bland. Sir William, give me joy: every thing goes as I wish. My daughter is a complying girl. She is ready to obey my commands. Clarissa is with her, beseeching, wrangling; complaining, soothing; now in a rage, and now in tears; one moment expostulating, and the next imploring; but all in vain; Belinda holds her resolution; and so, young gentleman, you are now completely happy.

Bel. Death to my hopes! can this be true? [*Aside.*

Bland. Sir William, give me your hand upon it. This will not only be a match of prudence, but of inclination.

Sir Will. There, George, there is news for you! your business is done.

Bland. She owns very frankly that her heart has been hitherto fixed upon a worthless man: she renounces him for ever, and is willing to give her hand as I shall direct.

Bel. What a dilemma am I brought into? [*Aside.*

Sir Will. George, what's the matter, boy? You a

bridegroom? Wounds! at your age I could cut a caper over the moon upon such an occasion.

Bel. I am more slack-mettled, sir: I cannot leap quite so high.

Sir Will. A cup too low, I fancy. Let us go and finish our bottle. Belinda shall be my toast. I'll give you her health in a bumper. Come, Mr. Blandford: I want to wash down the cobwebs of the law.

[*Exit.*

Bland. I attend you, Sir William.—Mr. Bellmont, follow us: we must have your company: you are under par: come, we will raise you a note higher.

[*Exit.*

Bel. You have sunk me so low, that I shall never recover myself. This behaviour of Belinda's!—Can she think her treachery to one lover will recommend her to another?

Enter CLARISSA.

Cla. Mr. Bellmont, I wish you joy, sir. Belinda has consented; and you have done the same. You are both consenting. The match is a very proper one. You will be finely paired.

Bel. You are misinformed, Clarissa; why will you do me this injustice?

Cla. Injustice! Mr. Blandford has reported every thing: he has done you justice: he has told us how easily you have been persuaded: don't imagine that I am hurt. I resign all pretensions: I can be pre-

vailed upon with as much ease as you, sir: I can copy the easy compliance of Mr. Bellmont.

Bel. If you will but hear me: moderate your anger.

Cla. Anger!—anger indeed! I should be sorry any thing that has happened were of consequence enough to disturb my peace of mind.—Anger!—I shall die with laughing at the thought. You may be false to your friends, sir; false to your vows; you may break every solemn engagement; Mr. Blandford wishes it; Belinda wishes it; and why should not you comply? Follow the dictates of your own heart, sir.

Bel. Whatever has happened, Clarissa, I am not to blame.

Cla. I dare say not; and here is a lady will say the same.

Enter BELINDA.

Belin. Spare your reproaches, Clarissa.—Mr. Bellmont, you too may spare me. The agitations of my mind distress me so, I know not which way to turn myself. The provocation I have had——

Cla. Provocation, madam!—from whom?

Belin. From your brother: you need not question me? you know what his conduct has been.

Bel. By Heaven you wrong him; and so you will find in the end.

Cla. Your own conduct, madam! will that stand as clear as my brother's? My Lady Restless, I believe,

has something to say. It will become you to refute that charge.

Belin. Downright malice, my dear: but I excuse you for the present.

Enter TIPPET.

Tip. [*To* Belinda.] Your chair is ready, ma'am.

Belin. Very well: I have not a moment to lose: I am determined to know the bottom of this whole affair. Clarissa, when I return you will be better disposed to hear me.

Cla. You need not trouble yourself, ma'am: I am perfectly satisfied.——Tippet, will you be so good as to order my chair.

Belin. Well; suspend your judgment. This business is of importance: I must leave you now.

[*Exit with* Tippet.

Bel. Clarissa, if you knew how all this wounds me to the heart.

Cla. Oh! keep your resolution; go on with your very honourable design: inclination should be consulted; and the necessity of the case, you know, will excuse you to the world.

Bel. Command your temper, and the whole shall be explained.

Cla. It wants no explanation: it is too clear already.

Bel. A moment's patience would set every thing right.—'Sdeath! one would imagine that Lady Rest-

less had been speaking to you too. This is like the rest of them: downright jealousy!

Cla. Jealousy!—Upon my word, sir, you are of great consequence to yourself: but you shall find that I can with perfect serenity banish you, and your Belinda, entirely from my thoughts.

Enter TIPPET.

Tip. The chairmen are in the hall, ma'am.

Bel. Let me but speak to you.

Cla. No, sir: I have done: I shall quit this house immediately. [*Going.*] Mrs. Tippet, could you let me have pen, ink, and paper, in your lady's room?

Tip. Every thing is ready there, ma'am.

Cla. Very well:—I'll go and write a letter to Belinda. I'll tell her my mind, and then adieu to all of you. [*Exit with* Tippet.

Bel. How perverse and obstinate!

Enter Sir WILLIAM.

Sir Will. Well, George, every thing is settled.

Bel. Why really, sir, I don't know what to say. I wish you would consider——

Sir Will. At your tricks again?

Bel. I am above an attempt to deceive you: but if all circumstances were known—I am not fond of speaking detractingly of a young lady; but for the honour of your family, sir, let us desist from this match.

Sir Will. Roguery, lad! there's roguery in this.

Bel. I see you will force me to speak out. If there is, unhappily, a flaw in Belinda's reputation——

Sir Will. How?

Bel. This is no time to dissemble. In short, sir, my Lady Restless, a worthy lady here in the neighbourhood, has discovered a connection between her and Sir John Restless; Sir John and Lady Restless lived in perfect harmony till this affair broke out. The peace of the family is now destroyed. The whole is come to the knowledge of my friend Beverley: with tears in his eyes, with a bleeding heart (for he loved Belinda tenderly), he has at last mustered up resolution, and taken his final leave.

Sir Will. Ay! can this be true?

Bel. It is but too true; I am sorry to report it. And now, sir, judge yourself——Oh!——here comes Mr. Blandford: 'tis a dreadful scene to open to him; a terrible story for the ear of a father! You had best take no notice: we need not be accessary to a young lady's ruin: it is a family affair, and we may leave them to patch it up among themselves, as well as they can.

Sir Will. If these things are so, why then the case is altered.

Enter BLANDFORD.

Bland. Hey! what's in the wind now? You two look as grave! what's come over you? For my part, my spirits are above proof with joy: I am in love with my daughter for her compliance, and I fancy I shall

throw in an odd thousand more, to enliven the honey-moon.

Sir Will. Mr. Blandford, we are rather in a hurry, I think. We had better not precipitate matters.

Bland. Nay, if you are for changing your mind—Look you, sir; my daughter shall not be trifled with. —Where is she? Where is my girl? Who answers there?

Enter TIPPET.

Bland. Where's Belinda?

Tip. She is not gone far, sir: just stept out upon a moment's business to Sir John Restless.

Sir Will. Gone to Sir John Restless! [*Aside.*

Bel. You see, sir.— [*To Sir* William.

Bland. I did not think she knew Sir John.

Sir Will. Yes, she knows him: she has been acquainted with him for some time past.

Bland. What freak has she got in her head? She is not gone after her Mr. Beverley, I hope. Zookers, this has an odd appearance. I don't like it: I'll follow her this moment.

Sir Will. You are right: I'll attend you.—Now, George, this will explain every thing. [*Aside.*]—Come, Mr. Blandford, this may be an escape: young birds will wing their flight.

Bland. Well, well, say no more: we shall see how it is. Come, Sir William: it is but a step. [*Exit.*

Bel. [*To* Tippet.] Where is Clarissa?

Sir Will. [*Looking back.*] What, loitering, George?

Bel. I follow you, sir. [*Exit Sir* William.] Clarissa is not gone, I hope?

Tip. Gone, sir!—She is writing, and crying, and wiping her eyes, and tearing her paper, and beginning again, and in such a piteous way!

Bel. I must see her: she must come with us. If Lady Restless persists in her story, who knows what turn this affair may take? Come, Mrs. Tippet, shew me the way. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Hall in the House of Sir JOHN RESTLESS. *A loud Rap at the Door; and enter* ROBERT.

Rob. What a hurry you are in there?—This is my lady, I suppose. Where can she have been?—Now for more confusion. If she finds Madam Belinda with Sir John, we are all blown up again.

Sir JOHN. [*Peeping in.*]

Sir John. Robert, Robert, is that your lady?

Rob. Mercy on us! She is coming, I believe, sir.—[*Looks out.*] I see her chair: it is my lady.

Sir John. Don't let her know that Belinda is in the house.

Rob. Not if I can help it. Trust to me, sir. [*Exit*

Sir John.] Here she comes. What has she been about?

A Chair is brought into the Hall.

Lady Rest. [*Coming out of the chair.*] Is Sir John at home?

Rob. I fancy he is, my lady.

Lady Rest. Has any body been with him?

Rob. He has been all alone, writing letters in his study: he desired not to be interrupted.

Lady Rest. I shall not interrupt him, I promise him. You never will tell me any thing, Robert: I don't care who comes after him. To-morrow I shall quit this house, and then he may riot in licentious pleasure. If he asks for me, I am not well; I am gone to my own apartment: I hope to see no more of him. [*Going.*

Chair. Shall your ladyship want the chair any more to-night?

Lady Rest. I don't know what I shall want. Leave the chair there: you may wait. [*Exit.*

Chair. Ay, always a waiting job. [*Puts the chair aside: Exeunt Chairman and* Robert.]

Enter Sir JOHN *and* BELINDA.

Belin. If you will but permit me to say a word to her——

Sir John. Excuse me for the present: I beg you will.

Belin. A short interview with Lady Restless might clear up all my doubts: what objection can you have?

Sir John. A million of objections. You do not know the consequence of being seen in this house. She will interpret every thing her own way. I am unhappy, madam, while you stay.

Belin. There is more cruelty in your refusal than you can imagine. Mr. Beverley's character is in question: it is of the last importance to me to know the whole truth.

Sir John. You know it all, madam. Mr. Beverley's character is too clear. Proofs thicken, and grow stronger every hour. Since the visit I paid you this very day, I have made another discovery. I found him lurking here in my house.

Belin. Found him here, sir?

Sir John. Found him here. He was lying in ambush for another amorous meeting.

Belin. If there is no mistake in this business——

Sir John. Mistake! May I trust my own eyes? I saw him; I spoke to him; I taxed him with his guilt. He was concealed in her closet: does that amount to proof? Her maid Tattle stationed him there. My lady was privy to it: she favoured the stratagem. Are you satisfied now, madam?

Belin. The particulars of this discovery, Sir John, may convince me: tell me all, sir: you will oblige me.

Sir John. Enquire no more for the present. You will oblige me, madam. Robert shall see you safe

home. I would not have my lady find us together: I think I hear her: no, no. In a day or two the particulars will be known to the wide world. Where is Robert?—He shall conduct you home. My peace and happiness require it.

Belin. My peace and happiness are destroyed for ever. If your story be true——

Sir John. It is too true: I wish you a good night. I am miserable while you are here.—Robert!

Belin. Deliver me! I am ruined. I hear my father's voice: what brings him hither? I am undone if he finds me. Let me retire into that room.

Sir John. That room will not do: you will be seen there.

Belin. Cann't I go up stairs? [*Going.*

Sir John. No; I am ruined, if you go that way.—Hell and distraction!—My Lady Restless coming down! Here, madam, here; into that chair. You will be concealed there: nobody will suspect you.

Belin. Any where, sir: put me any where, to avoid this impending storm. [*Goes into the chair.*

Sir John. [*Shutting the chair.*] This is lucky. I am safe now. Let my lady come as soon as she will.

Enter Lady RESTLESS.

Lady Rest. I only wanted to say one word, sir.

Enter BLANDFORD.

Bland. Sir John, I am obliged to intrude: I am told my daughter is here.

Lady Rest. There! he has heard it all.

Bland. I have heard that Belinda came to your house: on what business, I do not know. I hope, Sir John, that you do not harbour the girl to disturb the peace and happiness of a father.

Sir John. That imputation, sir——

Lady Rest. He does harbour her.

Sir John. Mr. Blandford, I give you my honour—

Lady Rest. I know he does. He has ruined your daughter; he has injured you, sir, as well as me, in the most essential point.

Sir John. She raves; she is mad. If you listen to her——

Enter Sir WILLIAM *and* BEVERLEY.

Bland. I am glad you are come, Sir William. This is more than I expected.

Sir John. And more than I expected. There, madam, there is your favourite again!

Bev. My visit is public, sir. I come to demand, in the presence of this company, an explanation of the mischief you have done me.

Sir John. You need not be so public, sir. The closet is ready for you: Tattle will turn the key, and you will there be very safe.

Lady Rest. How can you persist in such a fallacy? He knows, he perfectly well knows it was an accident; a mere blunder of the servant, entirely unknown to me.

Sir John. She was privy to the whole.

Bland. This is beside my purpose. I came hither in quest of my daughter: a father demands her. Is she here? Is she in the house?

Sir John. In this house, sir? Our families never visited. I am not acquainted with her.

Lady Rest. He is acquainted with her. I saw him clasp her in his arms.

Bland. In his arms! When? Where? Tell me all.

Lady Rest. Yes, now let him give an account of himself.

Sir John. When you have accounted for your actions, madam——

Lady Rest. Render an account to the lady's father, sir.

Bland. Yes, to her father. Account with me, sir. When and where was all this?

Lady Rest. This very day; at noon; in the Park.

Bev. But in the eyes of the whole world: I know Belinda: I can acquit her.

Sir John. And I proclaim her innocence. We can both acquit her. [*Goes up to* Beverley.

Lady Rest. You are both in a plot: both combined.

Sir John. It was all harmless; all inoffensive. Was not it, Mr. Beverley?

Bev. Yes, all, all.

Lady Rest. All guilt; manifest, downright guilt.

Sir Will. If you all talk together, we shall never understand.

Bev. I understand it all.—Mr. Blandford, you met Belinda in the Park this morning?

Bland. I did, sir.

Bev. You accosted her violently: the harshness of your language overpowered her spirits: she was ready to faint: Sir John was passing by: she was going to drop down: Sir John assisted her: that is the whole of the story. Injured as I am, I must do justice to Belinda's character. She may treat me with the caprice and pride of insolent beauty; but her virtue claims respect.

Sir John. There now; there! that is the whole of the story.

Lady Rest. The whole of the story! no, Sir John: you shall suppress nothing: you could receive a picture from her.

Sir John. You, madam, could receive a picture; and you, Mr. Beverley, could present it.

Lady Rest. Mr. Beverley, you hear this!

Bev. I can justify you, madam. I gave your lady no picture, Sir John.

Sir John. She had it in her hand. I saw her print her kisses on it, and in that moment I seized it from her.

Bev. Belinda dropt it in the Park, when she was taken ill: I had just given it to her. Your lady found it there.

Lady Rest. I found it on that very spot.

Bev. There, sir; she found it.

Sir John. I found you locked up in her cabinet; concealed in private.

Lady Rest. But with no bad intent.

Sir John. With the worst intent.

Bev. Your jealousy, Sir John, has fixed an imputation upon me, who have not deserved it: and your suspicions, madam, have fallen, like a blasting mildew, upon a lady, whose name was never before sullied by the breath of calumny.

Sir Will. The affair is clear as to your daughter, Mr. Blandford. I am satisfied, and now we need not intrude any longer upon this family.

Enter BELLMONT *and* CLARISSA.

Walk in, George: every thing is right: your fears may now go to rest.

Lady Rest. I shall not stay another night in this house. Time will explain every thing. Call my chairmen there. Sir John has it his own way at present.

Enter Chairmen.

You have settled this among yourselves. I shall now go to my brother's. Sir John, I have no more to say at present. Hold up. [*Goes to the chair.*

Sir John. Let the chair alone. You shall not go: you shall not quit this house, till I consent.

[*Goes between her and the chair.*

Lady Rest. I say hold up.

Sir John. Let it alone.

Lady Rest. Very well, sir: I must be your prisoner, must I?

Sir John. It is mine to command here. No loose

escapes this night; no assignations; no intrigues to disgrace me.

Lady Rest. Such inhuman treatment! I am glad there are witnesses of your behaviour. [*Walks away.*

Bland. I am sorry to see all this confusion; but since my daughter is not here——

Lady Rest. He knows where she is, and so you will find.

Sir John. [*Coming forward.*] Your daughter is innocent, sir, I give you my honour. Where should she be in this house? Lady Restless has occasioned all this mischief. She formed a story to palliate her own misconduct. To her various artifices you are a stranger; but in a few days you may depend——

Lady Rest. [*Aside, as she goes towards the chair.*] He shall find that I am not to be detained here.

[*Makes signs to the Chairmen to hold up.*

Sir John. I say, gentlemen, you may depend that I have full proof, and in a little time every thing will—

[*The chair is opened, and* Belinda *comes out.*

Lady Rest. Who has proof now? There, there! in his house all the time!

Bland. What do I see?

Bev. Belinda here!

Sir Will. So, so! there is something in it, I see.

Sir John. Distraction! this is unlucky.

Lady Rest. What say you now, Mr. Beverley?—Now, Mr. Blandford! there; ocular demonstration for you!

Sir Will. George, take Clarissa as soon as you will. Mr. Blandford, you will excuse me, if I now decline any further treaty with you.

Bland. This abrupt behaviour, Sir William——

Sir Will. I am satisfied, sir. I am resolved. Clarissa, you have my approbation: my son is at your service. Here, George, take her, and be happy.

Bel. [*Taking her hand.*] To you, from this moment, I dedicate all my future days.

Bland. Very well: take your own way. I can still protect my daughter.

Bev. And she deserves your protection: my dear Belinda, explain all this: I know it is in your power.

Belin. This generous behaviour, sir, recalls me to new life. You, I am now convinced, have been accused by my Lady Restless without foundation.—Whatever turn her ladyship's unhappy self-tormenting fancy may give to my conduct, it may provoke a smile, but will excite no other passion.

Lady Rest. Mighty fine! what brought you to this house?

Belin. To be a witness of your folly, madam, and Sir John's into the bargain.

Bel. That I can vouch: Sir John can fill his mind with vain chimæras, with as apt a disposition as his lady. Beverley has been represented in the falsest colours—

Lady Rest. That I admit: Sir John invented the story.

Bev. And Belinda, madam, has been cruelly slandered by you.

Sir John. She has so: that I admit.

Belin. And my desire to see all this cleared up, brought me to this house, madam. Now you see what has made all this confusion.

Lady Rest. Oh! I expected these airs. You may discuss the point where you please: I will hear no more upon the subject. [*Exit.*

Bland. Madam, the subject must be settled.

[*Follows her.*

Sir John. You have a right to insist upon it. The whole shall be explained this moment. Sir William, you are a dispassionate man. Give us your assistance. [*Exit.*

Sir Will. With all my heart. George, you are no longer concerned in this business, and I am glad of it. [*Exit with young* Bellmont.

Cla. [*To* Beverley.] Now, brother, now is your time: your difficulties are all removed. Sir John suspected you without reason: my Lady Restless did the same to Belinda: you are both in love, and now may do each other justice. I can satisfy my Lady Restless and your father. [*Exit.*

Bev. [*Aside.*] I see, I see my rashness.

Belin. [*Aside.*] I have been terribly deceived.

Bev. If she would but forgive my folly.

Belin. Why does not he open his mind to me? I cann't speak first.

Bev. What apology can I make her?—Belinda!

Belin. Charming! he begins. [*Aside, and smiling.*

Bev. [*Approaching.*] Belinda!—no answer?—Belinda!

Belin. Mr. Beverley!— [*Smiles aside.*

Bev. Don't you think you have been very cruel to me, Belinda? [*Advancing towards her.*

Belin. Don't you think you have been barbarous to me? [*Without looking at him.*

Bev. I have: I grant it. Can you find in your heart to forgive me?

Belin. [*Without looking at him.*] You have kept me on the rack this whole day, and can you wonder that I feel myself unhappy?

Bev. I am to blame: I acknowledge it. If you knew how my own heart reproaches me, you would spare yourself the trouble. With tears in my eyes I now speak to you: I acknowledge all my errors.

Belin. [*Looking at him.*] Those are not tears, Mr. Beverley. [*Smiling.*

Bev. They are; you see that they are.

Belin. Ah! you men can command tears.

Bev. My life! my angel! [*Kisses her hand.*] Do you forgive me?

Belin. No; I hate you. [*Looking pleased at him.*

Bev. Now, I don't believe that. [*Kisses her cheek.*] Do you hate me, Belinda?

Belin. How could you let an extravagance of temper get the better of you? You know the sincerity

of my affection. Oh, Mr. Beverley, was it not ungenerous?

Bev. It was; I own it; on my knees, I own it.

Belin. [*Laughing.*] Oh, proud man! have I humbled you?—Since you submit to my will and pleasure, I think I can forgive you. Beg my picture back this moment. [*Shews it to him.*

Bev. [*Taking the picture.*] I shall adore it ever, and heal this breach with uninterrupted love.

Enter Sir JOHN, *Lady* RESTLESS, *Sir* WILLIAM, BLANDFORD, BELLMONT, *and* CLARISSA.

Sir John. [*Laughing.*] Why, yes; it is very clear. I can now laugh at my own folly, and my wife's too.

Lady Rest. There has been something of a mistake, I believe.

Bev. You see, Sir John, what your suspicions are come to. I never was within your doors before this day; nor should I, perhaps, have had the honour of speaking to your lady, had it not been for the misunderstanding your mutual jealousies occasioned between Belinda and me.

Bland. And your ladyship has been ingenious enough to work out of those whimsical circumstances a charge against my daughter. Ha, ha!

Sir John. It is ever her way, sir. I told you, my dear, that you would make yourself very ridiculous.

Lady Rest. I fancy, sir, you have not been behindhand with me. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Will. And now, Mr. Blandford, I think we

may as well let the match go on as we at first intended.

Bland. No, no more of that: you have disposed of your son. Belinda, I no longer oppose your inclinations: take Mr. Beverley as soon as you will.

Sir John. Now let us see: if she agrees to marry him, why then, she knows he is innocent, and I shall be satisfied. [*Aside.*

Belin. If you insist upon it, sir.

Bland. I do insist.

Lady Rest. If Beverley accepts of her, all my suspicions are at an end. [*Aside.*

Bev. Thus let me take the bright reward of all my wishes. [*Takes her hand.*

Belin. Since it is over, you have used your authority, sir, to make me happy indeed. We have both seen our error, and frankly confess that we have been in the wrong too.

Sir Will. Why, we have been all in the wrong, I think.

Sir John. It has been a day of mistakes, but of fortunate ones, conducing at last to the advantage of all parties. My Lady Restless will now be taught—

Lady Rest. Sir John, I hope you will be taught—

Bland. Never mention what is past. The wrangling of married people about unlucky questions that break out between them, is like the lashing of a top: it only serves to keep it up the longer.

Sir John. Very true: and since we have been ALL

IN THE WRONG TO-DAY, we will, for the future, endeavour to be ALL IN THE RIGHT.

Bev. A fair proposal, Sir John: we will make it our business, both you, who are married, and we, who are now entering into that state, by mutual confidence to ensure mutual happiness.

The God of Love thinks we profane his fire,
When trifles light as air mistrust inspire.
But where esteem and gen'rous passions spring,
There reigns secure, and waves his purple wing;
Gives home-felt peace; prevents the nuptial strife;
Endears the bliss, and bids it last for life.

[Exeunt omnes.

EPILOGUE.

WRITTEN BY MR. GARRICK.

Spoken by Mrs. YATES.

BLESS me, this summer-work is so fatiguing!
And then our plays so bustling, so intriguing!
Such miffing, sighing, scolding, all together!
These love affairs suit best with colder weather.
At this warm time these writers shou'd not treat you,
With so much love, and passion,—for they'll heat you:
Poets, like Weavers, should with taste and reason,
Adapt their various goods to ev'ry season.
For the hot months, the fanciful and slight;
For mind and body, something cool and light:
Authors themselves indeed neglect this rule;
Dress warm in summer, and at Christmas cool.
I told our Bard within, these five-act plays,
Are rich brocades, unfit for sultry days.
Were you a cook, said I, would you prepare
Large hams, and roasted sirloins for your fare?
Their very smoke would pall a city glutton;
A Tragedy *would make you all unbutton!*
Both appetites now ask for daintier picking,
Farce, pantomime, cold lamb, or white-legg'd chicken.
At Ranelagh, fine rolls and butter see:
Signor Tenducci, *and the best green tea!*

Italian singing is as light as feather;
Beard *is too loud, too powerful for this weather!*
Vauxhall more solidly regales your palates;
Champaigne, cantata's, cold boil'd beef, and ballads.
What shall we do your different tastes to hit?
You *relish satire*; [To the Pit.] you *ragouts of wit*;
[Boxes.
Your *taste is humour, and high-season'd joke*; [1st Gall.
You *call for hornpipes, and for Hearts of Oak!* [2d Gall.
O could I wish and have!—A conjuring man
Once told my fortune,—and he charm'd this fan!
Said with a flirt I might my will enjoy:
Think you there's magic in this little toy?
I'll try its pow'r; and, if I gain my wish,
I'll give you, sirs, a downright English dish.
Come then; a song [Music is heard.] *indeed! I see 'twill do.*
Take heed, gallants, I'll play the deuce with you.
Whene'er I please, I'll charm you to my sight;
And tear a FAN WITH FLIRTING *ev'ry night.*

Enter two BALLAD SINGERS, who sing the following Song.

S O N G.

Y E Critics above, and ye Critics below,
Ye finer spun Critics, who keep the mid row,
O tarry a moment, I'll sing you a song,
Shall prove that, like us, you are all in the wrong.

Ye Poets, who mount on the fam'd winged steed,
Of prancing, and wincing, and kicking take heed:
For when by those hornets, the Critics, you're stung,
You're thrown in the dirt, and are all in the wrong.

Ye Actors, who act what these writers have writ,
Pray stick to your Poet, and spare your own wit;
For when with your own you unbridle your tongue,
I'll hold ten to one you are all in the wrong.

Ye Knaves, who make news for the foolish to read,
Who print daily slanders the hungry to feed:
For a-while you mislead 'em, the news-hunting throng,
Till the pillory proves, you are all in the wrong.

Ye grave Politicians, so deep and so wise,
With your hums, and your shrugs, and your uplifted eyes,
The road that you travel, is tedious and long,
But I pray you jog on; you are all in the wrong.

Ye happy fond husbands, and fond happy wives,
Let never suspicion embitter your lives;
Let your prudence be stout, and your faith be as strong;
Who watch, or who catch, they are all in the wrong.

Ye unmarried folks be not bought, or be sold,
Let age avoid youth, and the young ones the old;
For they'll soon get together, the young with the young,
And then, my wise old ones, you're all in the wrong.

Ye soldiers and sailors, who bravely have fought,
Who honour and glory, and laurels have bought;
Let your foes but appear, you'll be at 'em ding dong,
And if they come near you, they're all in the wrong.

Ye judges of taste to our labours be kind,
Our errors are many, pray wink, or be blind;
Still find your way hither to glad us each night,
And our note we will change to you're all in the right.

THE END.

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MDZ Münchener DigitalisierungsZentrum Digitale Bibliothek

Murphy, Arthur

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